



Jayhawk Chapter MOAA Newsletter



This newsletter is published bimonthly by the Jayhawk Chapter of Kansas, Military Officers Association of America, as a service to all members. The Jayhawk emblem is used with the permission of the registered trademark owner, the University of Kansas.

July Program:

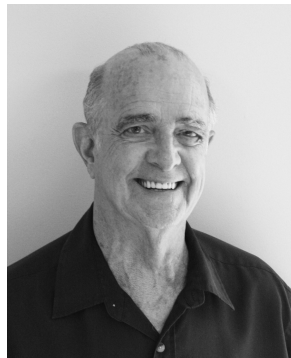
Our guest speaker will be former Mayor and current Lawrence City Commissioner Mike Amyx, who will update us on the affairs of Lawrence.

★★★★★ CHAPTER
awarded for
2002 / 2003 / 2005 /
2008 / 2009 / 2010 / 2011

★★★ CHAPTER
awarded for
2004 / 2006 / 2007

President's Corner . . .

Past President Bob Johnson has sent in our Levels of Excellence summary of the chapter's accomplishments in the past year. John Halladay and I will be in Colorado Springs in November for MOAA's annual meeting, and hoping to receive another Five-Star Award for Jayhawk Chapter. Thanks, Bob, for preparing this long and detailed report.



Please welcome new 2013 chapter member Al Lopes, a Life Member of MOAA and no stranger to Jayhawk Chapter. Good to see you again, Al!

You can't have missed MOAA's "Storming the Hill" campaign this April, where our organization, one of the nation's most effective lobbies, personally visited with almost every senator and representative in the nation's capital. They were a powerful voice against proposed attacks on our pay, health care, and other issues. We all should help this effort by sending in suggested messages to our elected officials whenever we get the chance.

You summer travelers, don't miss the benefits of lodging and other facilities at military installations along the way. To locate these, if you have a Retired Military Almanac, hang onto it, as they were no longer printed after 2006. But a list of all installations is available at <http://www.militaryinstallations.dod.mil>. Once there, click on "View a directory of installations," and you can get a complete state-by-state listing by branch of service. And check out military resorts as well, stateside and overseas — see the article in this month's MOAA magazine, *Military Officer*.

Dean

Volume XVIII, Issue 4

1 July 2013

Staff:

- President:
COL E. Dean Bevan, AUS (Ret)
- 1st Vice-President:
RADM H. Edward Phillips, USN (Ret)
- 2nd Vice-President:
LCDR Michael R. Miller, USN (Ret)
- Secretary:
COL John W. Halladay, AUS (Ret)
- Treasurer:
CAPT James S. Cooper, USN (Ret)
- Past-President:
Maj Robert W. Johnson, USAF (Ret)
- Directors:
Maj Robert W. Johnson, USAF (Ret)
COL John Connolly, USA (Ret)
LTC Gerald Rutledge, USA (Ret)
Capt Andrew D. Bauch, USAF (Ret)
LTC Michael R. Devlin, USA (Ret)
LTC Storm E. Reynolds, ROTC
- Newsletter Editors:
COL John & Shirley Halladay
- Web Master:
Lt Col Stanley Sneegas, USAF (Ret)

Inside this issue:

July Program	1
President's Message	1
Jayhawk Chapter News	2
Army News	3
Navy News	3
Air Force News	4
MOAA Legislative Updates	6
Dinner Reservation Form	11
MOAA calendar & websites	12

*** Reservations should be sent
to Jim Cooper by
11 July**



JAYHAWK CHAPTER NEWS

PLEASE NOTE DATE CHANGE FOR JULY MEETING – IT IS NOW WEDNESDAY, 17 JULY

CONDOLENCES

Pattye Gehrt, wife of member Floyd Gehrt, passed away on May 30th. Pattye was born October 12, 1930 in Salina and lived her life in Abilene & Lawrence. Pattye is survived by husband Floyd, children: Mark & Gary Welsh, Tim & Jennifer Gehrt, grandchildren: Allison & Tom Welsh, Drew, Molly, Kiki Gehrt and Patty's dear friend Diane Fritzel.

Gordon Longabach was awarded the “Order of Saint Barbara” at a reunion of the 1st Infantry Division artillerymen at Ft. Sill in May. His wife, Doris, was given the “Order of Molly Pitcher.” Saint Barbara is the patron saint for artillerymen: Molly Pitcher took over her wounded husband’s job on an artillery piece during the Revolutionary War. Gordon had earlier been made a “Distinguished Member of the 5th Field Artillery Regiment” at Ft. Riley. Next year’s reunion will be back at Ft. Riley. The 5th Field Artillery was started under Alexander Hamilton and has been the Army’s oldest serving unit.

From Graham Kreicker:

Free Medicare Aneurysm Screenings

Aneurysms are very dangerous and often fatal. For this reason, Medicare is now providing free Sonogram screenings for abdominal aneurysms for any person that smoked over 100 cigarettes in their lifetime. Apparently smoking increases the chance of having an aneurysm That includes millions of veterans. The painless test takes about thirty minutes and results are usually reported to your doctor within 48 hours. The test is done at LMH South and, no doubt, at other locations. Knowing your status in this regard can bring great peace of mind.

Bizarre Behavior Explained

Dear MOAA members and guests, I am writing to apologize for my behavior when my friend Gary Bjorge was speaking earlier this year. Shortly after sitting down, I knocked over my full wine glass near my left hand. A short time later I knocked over my water glass in the same position. While there is no excuse for this, there is a reason. I had lost my peripheral vision in that eye due to Ptosis. Without my noticing, overtime my eye lids drooped lower and lower and I could no longer see things I should have. The next morning I went for an eye exam and ten days later I had eye lid surgery to correct the problem. Ptosis is a growing problem with our aging population. An easy eye exam tells if you need the surgery. It is fully covered by Medicare and Tricare, and virtually painless. Again, I apologize! Graham Kreicker

CORRECTION TO MAY NEWSLETTER

It was **Dave Darwin** not Dean Bevan who on June 1, became the Chair of the KU Department of Civil, Environmental & Architectural Engineering.

(A computer glitch blended the two adjacent messages and my brain didn't catch it!!)

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

We, Army ROTC Cadre, are pretty much out of contact for the summer with either National Guard Annual Training and Summer Camps. Look forward to having a good update for the next newsletter.

Have a great summer.

LTC Storm Reynolds

Army ROTC Graduating Cadets received their gold bars from COL John Halladay courtesy of the Jayhawk Chapter and MOAA National. 09 May 2013



Navy News

CAPT David Schweizer, USN



Greetings from the Jayhawk Navy!

It's a great day in Kansas as the Naval ROTC finished another successful semester! Our unit proudly welcomed the newest Navy and Marine Corps officers during a Joint Commissioning Ceremony held at the Kansas Union on May 20th, the day after the University's Spring Commencement.

Present at the Joint Service Commissioning were KU Chancellor Bernadette Gray-Little and RADM Phil Davidson, the flag sponsor for our Jayhawk NROTC Unit. RADM Davidson administered the oath of office to the KU Cadets and Midshipmen earning their commissions. He then gave a keynote speech in which he challenged our newest officers to do their very best in the service of our nation. Towards the end of his remarks he stated, "If you remember only one thing from what I tell you today, it is this, be a person of integrity." It was a great honor to have him welcome our newest officers to the fleet.

Pictured below are the newly commissioned six Ensigns and four 2nd Lieutenants along with RADM Davidson and myself.



These fine new officers were excited to begin the next chapter of their lives as family and friends shared in the moment. "It is a fantastic feeling to have earned a commission as a naval officer," said ENS Nathan Slaughter, one of the newly commissioned officers. "This is the culmination of years of hard work and has been a dream of mine since I was in high school. I am excited at the opportunity to serve my country and it is a proud moment for my family who have supported me in this journey."

In other news, most of our Jayhawk Battalion is deployed to summer training with the fleet. Our 3rd Class Midshipmen, who will be sophomores in the Fall, are attending CORTRAMID. This five week training evolution includes an introduction to the different warfare communities in our navy. Our 2nd Class Midshipmen will go aboard ships, aviation squadrons, or submarines to further familiarize themselves with the spectrum of jobs available to them upon graduation and commissioning. Finally, our 1st Class Midshipmen (rising seniors) will take on the role of a Junior Officer in the Fleet. They will shadow a Fleet JO and focus on the skills and responsibilities that await them one year from now.

As summer training continues and we prepare for another incoming class of Midshipmen, you can be sure that the assistance that MOAA offers to our young men and women is integral to their success. With that we thank you for your continued support.

CAPT David Schweizer

RADM Ed Phillips presented gold bars to the Midshipmen and Cadets at their Spring Awards Ceremony.



Air Force News

LtCol Montague D. Samuel, USAF

Greetings from Det 280, the Flying Jayhawk Wing,

This is a bittersweet update for me since it will be my last . . . more on that later.

It's hard to believe that we've completed another semester. It's truly been a whirlwind! We brought our school year to a close with the commissioning of nine new 2Lts into the Air Force. On Monday, 20 May, we commissioned:

Cadet Nicholas Brunkhorst, *Mitchell, NE*
Aerospace Engineering (Pilot)

Cadet Mason Bruza, *Paola, KS*
Physics (Cyberspace Operations)

Cadet Britni Charles, *Haysville, KS*
Political Science (Acquisitions)

Cadet Zachary Early, *Las Vegas, NV*
Slavic Languages and Literatures (Airfield Operations)

Cadet Cole-Christian Holinaty, *Fort Leavenworth, KS*
Communication Studies (Missile/Nuclear Operations)

Cadet Kevin Jackson, *St. Louis, MO*
Communication Studies (Pilot)

Cadet Brian Tabares, *Emporia, KS*
Psychology (Behavioral Scientist)

Cadet Seth Wilson, *Berkley, MI*
African-American Studies (AF Office of Special Investigations (OSI))

Cadet Grant Worden, *Rochester, MN*
Aerospace Engineering (Aeronautical Developmental Engineer)

Vandenberg AFB CA for nuclear missile initial qualification training; Lt Mason Bruza will be assigned to Keesler AFB MS for Cyberspace Operations initial training; Lt Britni Charles (Acquisitions) will be assigned to Eglin AFB FL; Lt Zachary Early will be assigned to Columbus AFB MS for Airfield Operations initial training; Lt Brian Tabares (Behavioral Scientist) will be assigned to Wright-Patterson AFB OH; Lt Seth Wilson (AF Office of Special Investigations (OSI)) will be assigned to Little Rock AFB AR; and Lt Grant Worden (Aeronautical Developmental Engineer) will be assigned to Los Angeles AFB CA.

We are extremely proud of these young men and women and wish our new Lts the best of luck as they enter active duty. They are our future.

Most see Summer break usually as a chance to throttle back a bit, but we remain busy this summer. We have nine cadets this summer. Field Training is conducted every Summer and entails four weeks of vigorous physical and mental challenges to include weapons training and operating in austere conditions. Cadets in our program attend Field Training after they complete their sophomore year. Field Training consists of two parts: In-garrison training in Alabama and Air Expeditionary Force (AEF) (i.e., deployment) training in Mississippi. Completion of Field Training with a recommendation for continuation in our program is a requirement for entry into our Professional Officer Course (i.e., advance/commissioning program). As our second year cadets/rising juniors work to clear this major hurdle . . . we expect all to succeed . . ., the cadre has been dealing with transitions.

In May, we welcomed TSgt Nichole Pearsall as our Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge (NCOIC) of Personnel. We've been without a Personnel NCOIC since July of last year. TSgt Pearsall is a native of South Carolina and comes to us from the National Security Agency (NSA), Fort George G. Meade, Maryland. Please join us in welcoming her and her family.

Mr. James Young, TSgt Air Force Reserves and our Administrative Assistant, will be out of the office later this summer for his annual training tour.

SSgt George White was selected to be a part of the Field Training AEF staff and departed this month for Mississippi where we know he'll enjoy all the nice warm and humid Mississippi weather. SSgt White will spend his Summer at Camp Shelby in Hattiesburg, MS. He will be busy supporting training activities associated with Field Training. He will provide administrative support and fulfill communications



A highlight for our seniors during the Spring Semester was notification of their initial duty station assignments. Lts Nicholas Brunkhorst and Kevin Jackson will be assigned to Vance Air Force Base (AFB) OK for undergraduate pilot training; Lt Cole-Christian Holinaty will be assigned to

requirements for all AFROTC training activities at Camp Shelby. SSgt White returns in August, just in time for the start of Fall Semester classes.

Our Operations Officer/Commandant of Cadets, Lt Col Brian Schroeder is a Reservist and his active duty tour comes to an end on 31 July. Lt Col Schroeder bids farewell with the following article:

“My time here in Lawrence is drawing to a close. After three very wonderful years here in Rock Chalk country, I must move on. I’ve thoroughly enjoyed my time here at The University of Kansas, the highlight of which was the time I spent as an assistant professor of aerospace studies and instructor of the junior-level leadership course, as well as the job I had as commandant of cadets of the entire Flying Jayhawk Wing. It is so rewarding to see young men and women grow into leaders and get commissioned as officers in our Air Force . . . this makes me very proud to be a part of AFROTC. I’ve been assigned here as part of a return to active duty program for reserve officers which was limited to three years. Therefore, it is time for me to return to reserve status and join the civilian ranks once again. I plan on returning to my old reserve position as a Hurricane Hunter with the 53rd Weather Reconnaissance Squadron at Keesler AFB in Biloxi, MS. Yup, I’m one of those crazy AF reservists that love to fly into hurricanes! I would like to thank the MOAA for their continued support of AFROTC through their generous scholarship and cadet recognition programs.”

-- Lt Col Schroeder

As Lt Col Schroeder departs, Capt Ben Smith will assume operations duties as the Operations Flight Commander. Capt Smith will be dual-hatted for a while covering both Operations and Recruiting Flight Commander duties since the Air Force hasn’t named a replacement for Lt Col Schroeder.

Fall term will start before you know it. Det 280 will hold a new student orientation (NSO) on 23 August, just prior to the start of classes. NSO is designed to give new cadets and parents a quick introduction to AFROTC courses and to see what life is like as an AFROTC cadet at KU. NSO also gives our administrative staff a chance to get records started on all the new folks. Current cadets in the program host a grill out at the end of the day to welcome the new cadets into the program.

As mentioned previously, this is my last newsletter update. In FY 2011, the Air Force changed AFROTC Detachment Commander assignments to a normal 2-year command tour to match all other commander tours in the Air Force. Therefore, I will depart in July for Barksdale AFB, which is located just outside of Shreveport, Louisiana. I will be assigned to the Operations Directorate at Air Force Global Strike Command, the Air Force’s newest command, which is responsible for all nuclear operations.

My replacement, Lt Col Brian Salmans arrives in July and we will changeover on 17 July. Lt Col Salmans will be coming to Det 280 from Maxwell AFB Alabama where he is currently the Chair of Distance Learning Operations at Air Command and Staff College. He is a graduate of Baylor University and has a Ph.D. in Business Computer Information Systems, which he received from the University of North Texas.

As I depart, I want each and everyone to know that I’ve truly enjoyed my two years here at KU. Commanding Det 280, the Flying Jayhawk Wing, has been extraordinary. Watching the “kids”/cadets grow into young men and women/Lts and knowing that I may have had a small part in that has been so rewarding. When we see and hear so many bad stories involving America’s youth, it’s refreshing to teach/instruct and mentor so many amazing and remarkable students/cadets. I wish everyone could see the high caliber young people we have here at Det 280. Additionally, my cadre at Det 280 is some of the very best that the Air Force has to offer.

Before I say my final farewell, I just want to let everyone know about a couple of upcoming events in the Fall. Det 280 will host its annual AFROTC Det 280 Alumni Weekend that will be held in conjunction with KU’s Homecoming. Also, be on the lookout for more information regarding the KU Salute to Service football game.

Finally Jayhawk Chapter of MOAA, a big “thank you” for your support to AFROTC Det 280 and me these last two years. It’s been a wonderful tour and the MOAA has enriched the lives of our detachment and cadets. Your presence is important to our success and you are greatly appreciated. Thank you again for your service and commitment.

I leave you with these words:

*May the road rise up to meet you.
May the wind always be at your back.
May the sun shine warm upon your face,
and rains fall soft upon your fields.
And until we meet again,
May God hold you in the palm of His hand*

ROCK, CHALK!

Very Respectfully,

Lt Col Montague D. Samuel

“Aim High...Fly, Fight, Win!”

Major Bob Johnson presented the gold bars to the Air Force Cadets at their Spring Awards Ceremony.

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 Legislative Update, 26 April 2013:

Lobbying Team Changes Guards

Today we wish MOAA Government Relations Director Col Steve Strobridge, USAF (Ret) a fond farewell. Strobridge is retiring after 19.5 years of stalwart service at MOAA.

Combined with his military career, Strobridge has spent the last 44 years serving our nation and its troops. He's left an indelible mark in his time at MOAA; he oversaw the passage of landmark legislation to improve military and veterans' health care, compensation, education, and quality of life.

His work is widely recognized and consistently praised. He was recently named one of the

[100 most influential defense policy makers](#).

Strobridge also served as co-chair of The Military Coalition for the past 12 years.

Col. Mike Hayden, USAF (Ret), will step in to fill the void left by Strobridge.

After leaving active duty and joining MOAA in July 2005, Hayden has led the charge on active duty and retired compensation issues, successfully championing restoration of military pay comparability and fending off inappropriate military retirement changes. For the last seven years he's served as co-chair of The Military Coalition's Retired Affairs Committee.

We're sincerely grateful for the enormous contributions of Steve, and wish him all the best in his retirement.

MOAA Legislative Update, 03 May 2013:

USAR Visits MOAA

Assistant Chief of the Army Reserve MG James Snyder, USA (Ret), and BG Tammy Smith, USA along with other USAR staff visited MOAA headquarters on April 24 to outline the Army Reserve's programs in support of ongoing operations in Afghanistan and to meet its manpower and personnel objectives in a resource-constrained environment.

The Army Reserve contains the major combat support and combat service support elements of the Army. Since September 11, 2001, over 210,000 Reserve soldiers have served on active duty. Presently, 13,219 Reservists are serving in Afghanistan and other worldwide assignments. The Army Reserve has 206,000 soldiers.

BG Smith gave an overview of USAR recruitment, retention and transition programs to support the component's manpower requirements. The USAR hopes to attract soldiers leaving active Army service at the end of their commitments and those separated involuntarily during the force drawdown. The Army Reserve has significant shortages in mid-grade officers and NCOs.

COL Tia Young, USAR, briefed on the Army Reserve's efforts to re-connect wounded warriors with community partners and local USAR units. More than 2,000 Reserve soldiers are in the Warrior Transition Unit program.

MOAA Deputy Director, COL Bob Norton, USA (Ret) gave an update on The Military Coalition and outlined key TMC legislative victories and objectives for Reserve component service members and families. Two Army Reserve Ambassadors and TMC representatives participated in the discussion.

MOAA President Vice Adm. Norbert R. Ryan Jr., USN (Ret) pledged MOAA's support to the Army Reserve and presented the MOAA 'challenge coin' at the conclusion of the session.

Joining Forces Announces New Hiring Pledge

MOAA President Vice Admiral Norb Ryan, USN (Ret) was among military and veteran association leaders invited to the White House this week for a Joining Forces Employment Event. Along with Ryan, were members of the President's Cabinet, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and business and community leaders.

To date, over 290,000 veterans and military spouses have found employment or received training through the [Joining Forces Initiative](#) – nearly three times the original goal of 100,000 set by President Obama two years ago.

MOAA Legislative Update, 10 May 2013:

Pentagon Budget: The Scary Sequel

After submitting a FY 2014 budget proposal that includes a sequestration "de-trigger" mechanism, the chair and ranking member of the Senate Armed Services Committee have asked the Pentagon to go back to the drawing board and submit an alternative plan that's \$52 billion less than the administration's original submission.

Committee Chair Sen. Carl Levin (D-Mich.) and ranking member Sen. James M. Inhofe (R-Okla.) sent a letter late last week to Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel asking for a scaled-back budget plan by July 1.

The two senators noted that, to date, little progress has been made toward finding a bipartisan agreement to avoid sequestration for FY 2014.

Without an agreement, the Pentagon faces another \$52 billion in across-the-board cuts established by the Budget Control Act of 2011.

Prime Referral Authorizations Waived

TRICARE temporarily is waiving referral authorization requirements for Prime beneficiaries in the West Region to help expedite referral processing by the new contractor, UnitedHealthcare Military & Veterans.

This waiver applies to any referrals obtained — or care received — between April 1 and May 18.

Referrals typically are entered electronically and generate an authorization from the managed care support contractor. While United Healthcare works to clear pending referrals, beneficiaries who are referred to a network specialist for TRICARE-covered services will not need an authorization.

Beneficiaries should request a written copy of their referral or ask their care provider to fax a copy to the specialist.

This waiver does not apply to beneficiaries using TRICARE Standard.

MOAA Legislative Update, 17 May 2013:

Family Survey Reflects MOAA Goals

On Thursday, Blue Star Families, a national non-profit organization dedicated to supporting our nation's military families, released the results of their 4th Annual Military Family Lifestyle Survey.

Representatives Sanford Bishop (D-GA) and Cathy McMorris Rogers (R-WA), co-chairs of the House Congressional Military Family Caucus offered remarks at this meeting highlighting the release of new survey results on the views of military family members.

Last November, over 5000 people took part in an on-line survey of military family members to determine the major issues facing them today.

73% of respondents were spouses, and 75% were affiliated with active-duty military personnel.

The top concerns identified were: pay/benefits with specific emphasis on changes to retirements benefits, military spouse employment, effects of deployment on children, and issues surrounding military child education.

The single greatest concern this year (listed by 35% of participants) was pay and benefits. This was followed closely by changes to retirement benefits (listed by 21% of respondents.)

Asked about the employment, 68% of spouses reported being a military spouse had a negative impact on their ability to pursue a career. Of the 61% not currently employed, 52% wanted to be. There are 23% that faced challenges moving a professional license across state lines.

MOAA Legislative Update, 24 May 2013:

DoD Scraps Medical Record Plan

To be or not to be – That's not just a question posed by Shakespeare's Hamlet, but a question military and veterans have been asking for years—When will medical record information be able to transfer seamlessly between the Departments of Defense (DoD) and Veterans Affairs (VA)?
ARE WE THERE YET!

No, not yet according to the DoD in a statement released today.

MOAA Legislative Update, 31 May 2013:

MOAA vs Military Times

Letter to the Editor, Military Times

Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) agrees the answer to budget woes facing the Pentagon is reform (June 3 Editorial "End the Budget Voodoo").

But MOAA disagrees the reform solution is to slash military personnel programs like the retirement system, which has kept retention from imploding over the past decade-plus of unprecedented wartime strain.

Furthermore, Dr. Jo Ann Rooney, Principal Deputy Undersecretary for Personnel and Readiness, testified the current military retirement system is "neither unaffordable nor spiraling out of control."

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs Army Gen. Martin Dempsey said, "We've been living with unconstrained resources for 10 years, and frankly, we've developed some bad habits." He outlined five areas where the Pentagon has strayed: acquisition, health care, infrastructure, operations, and reliance on contractors.

Reform should start with DoD eliminating redundant programs; seeking improvements in contracting, procurement, and acquisition; and finding economic, joint solutions in these areas to include health care delivery and budgeting. The service-centric, stove-piped bureaucracy that exists today should be eliminated.

Like many critics, the editor focuses on cutting the very programs needed to sustain a career military force while ignoring the processes needing immediate reform.

Sincerely,

Norbert R. Ryan Jr., VADM, USN (Ret)

President

Military Officers Association of America

Medicare/TRICARE Fix Heating Up

For years Congress has passed short-term patches to put off massive cuts in Medicare and TRICARE physician payments that would devastate access to health care. Every year Congress kicks the can down the road and the projected cuts grow larger.

Both sides of the aisle support repealing the flawed formula that drives these ever increasing cuts, but the cost of doing so proved prohibitive – until now.

Earlier this year the Congressional Budget Office lowered the estimated cost of repeal by more than \$100 billion. This change sparked optimism on the Hill that a permanent fix may finally be possible.

This week House Republicans introduced draft legislation to do away with the flawed Medicare/TRICARE physician reimbursement formula and replace it with a more financially sustainable system that incorporates performance metrics. It's the second House proposal that would eliminate the formula (the bipartisan H.R. 574 is the other).

MOAA is encouraged to see a long term solution finally gaining traction, and will continue to push members of Congress to work across the aisle to eliminate this perennial problem that threatens access to care and drives physicians away from Medicare and TRICARE.

When the formal bill is introduced we will add it to our key bills page.

Progress Slow on Vets' Homelessness

In 2009 the Secretary of Veterans Affairs announced the Department's commitment to a 5-year plan to end chronic veterans' homelessness.

This week, and almost 4-years later, Secretary Shinseki warned Wednesday at a National Coalition for Homeless Veterans event, "that tackling the problem of homelessness among veterans, like so many other problems vets face, is likely to get more difficult before it is solved ... the climb will

get steeper ... All the easy cases will have been housed. In the end, we will have the toughest, most difficult cases to solve: some prior failures, some behavioral problems, even some serious mental health issues.”

While Shinseki has made much progress toward achieving his goal by the end of 2015—a 17.2% decrease from January 2009-2012, about 60,000 veterans remain homeless.

MOAA Legislative Update, 07 June 2013:

Think Tanks Clueless about Military Personnel

A new consensus letter across the think tank community demonstrates ignorance about what makes the American military the finest in the world.

MOAA agrees with many of the signatories that Pentagon and Congressional leaders need to address imbalances within the defense budget. But pay and health care aren't to blame for breaking the defense budget (see “

A Bargain, Not a Liability” for more), and tinkering with the ecology of the All-Volunteer Force can and has had disastrous consequences.

Military pay, health care and retirement benefits are the foundational elements necessary to recruit and sustain an effective all-volunteer force.

The last time the government cut back on military pay and benefits the results were disastrous. Retention and recruitment hit rock bottom in the late 1990s, and it's taken the past 13 years to rebuild what was lost.

Aside from the fact the think tank letter devalues the main element that makes our military stand out from all others – servicemembers and families – it ignores two elephants in the room: acquisition and duplicative programs resulting in gross inefficiencies, and mismanagement and poor strategic planning

The core of the All-Volunteer Force is its career non-commissioned and mid-grade officers who are promoted through a carefully developed system for an entire career.

The consensus letter refers to a survey conducted by one of the member think tanks that claims military members do not value the compensation programs proven to be successful for maintaining the all-volunteer force over many years.

Aside from the fact that the think tanks have already admitted their study is invalid, it is insulting to the intelligence of our military members that they are said not to value adequate retirement, pay and health care benefits – the very pillars of the all-volunteer Force. It's simply not true.

The military has been extraordinarily stretched over the last decade and has been asked to do too much for too long with too few people in uniform. The wars have worn down the all-volunteer force and their families. This letter makes them out to be a huge fiscal liability to the nation rather than the ones ensuring our security around the globe.

Congress Targets Military Sexual Assault

The service chiefs were grilled by members of the Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC) on the growing number of sexual assaults in the military during a marathon hearing Tuesday.

The hearing came on the heels of a Pentagon report estimating some 26,000 servicemembers were sexually assaulted in 2012 alone.

Senators from both sides of the aisle made it clear that the services have not taken appropriate measures to prevent the growing tide of sexual assaults despite years of declaring “zero tolerance” for such behavior.

After questioning the chiefs about the growing problem Sen. Roy Blunt (R-MO) said he found their responses “stunningly bad.”

The chiefs acknowledged that they had neglected the spread of sexual abuse in the ranks. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Martin Dempsey (USA), said “I took my eye off the ball a bit in the commands I had...when you tie it all together, I wouldn't say that we've been inactive [on combating sexual assault], but we've been less active than we probably need to be.”

Seven bills have been introduced in the Senate to amend the UCMJ in order to protect victims and alter the process for prosecuting perpetrators, including changes recommended by Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel.

Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand (D-N.Y.) introduced the most sweeping proposal which would provide military prosecutors the power to decide which sexual assault cases to try.

Sen. Carl Levin (D-Mich.), Chairman of the Armed Services Committee appeared to support the measures endorsed by Secretary Hagel.

SASC will almost certainly include provisions to combat sexual assault in its draft version of the FY 2014 defense authorization bill. Panel members will begin drafting that legislation on June 12.

The recently completed House Armed Service Committee draft of the FY 2014 defense bill (H.R. 1960) includes a litany of sexual assault prevention provisions that fall closely in line with the SecDef's recommendations ([see article](#)).

MOAA believes the services have failed to do enough to prevent sexual assault in the military and provide appropriate care to alleged victims. We support Congressional action to address this problem, and will work with currently serving leadership and Congress to find the most appropriate path to eliminate sexual assault, sustain unit cohesion, and maintain an effective fighting force. We'll have a better picture of what changes are in store when the SASC completes a draft of the FY 2014 defense bill.

MOAA Legislative Update, 14 June 2013:

MOAA Testified on Survivor, Veterans Benefits

The Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs heard government and service organization witnesses, including MOAA, address a wide range of veterans' benefits legislation at a hearing Wednesday. Panel Chairman Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) noted the “very ambitious” agenda and said the committee would do what it could with limited funding to support it.

Led by Chairman Sanders, committee members pressed the first panel of senior VA witnesses on whether the VA would meet its goal of processing all VA disability claims within 125 days with 98 percent accuracy by the end of 2015.

MOAA's Deputy Director for Government Relations, COL Bob Norton, USA (Ret), testified on a second panel of witnesses with representatives from leading veteran service organizations. He thanked the chairman and committee for their tremendous support of veterans and addressed the following bills from MOAA's prepared statement for the record:

Several Veterans Transition and Employment measures would extend the time period for a program that allows older veterans to regain access to the Montgomery GI Bill for one year to gain a civilian license or certification (S. 6, Sen. Reid, D-Nev.); and require states to accept military skill training and experience towards the award of a comparable civilian license or certification (S. 495, Sen. Burr, R-N.C.);

Survivor Benefits:

- * S. 735 (Sanders) addresses the longstanding MOAA goal of permitting Survivors receiving VA Dependency and Indemnity Compensation to retain the benefit if they remarry at age-55; S. 430 permits surviving spouses of deceased service-disabled veterans to acquire the ownership interest in any deceased veteran's small business;
- * S. 1039 (Sen. Merkley, D-Ore.) authorizes Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits to Surviving spouses of the current conflicts, the same benefits available to their children under the Fry Scholarship program;

Honoring Career Reservists:

- * S. 629 (Sen. Pryor, D-Ark.) recognizes that the career service of National Guard and Reserve members who have no formal active duty service is sufficient to honor them as "veterans of the Armed Forces" (the bill prohibits the award of any new veterans' benefits for such service).

A number of senators testified in favor of legislation they sponsored including Sen. Merkley and Sen. Heller (R-Nev.) who each urged action on the Spouses of Heroes Education Act, S. 1039 (above). Merkley publicly thanked MOAA and COL Norton for helping his office structure the bill, which he noted also has the support of The Military Coalition and every major veterans organization.

In response to a question from Sen. Sanders on improving employment services for veterans, COL Norton gave an overview of MOAA's Career Transition services, which emphasize networking and transferable skills, and indicated the association's support for Sen. Sanders S. 922, a bill that would establish two pilot programs for veterans to gain workplace experience.

Draw Down with Dignity

By Col. Mike Hayden, USAF (Ret)

Following each major conflict, the Pentagon has tools — both voluntary and involuntary — at its disposal to draw down military end strength.

And here we are again. Over the next several years, the Pentagon's end strength will be reduced by 124,000, and that's *if* sequestration is "de-triggered" as proposed by the administration.

It's been reported that without a sequestration fix in place, the services might face an additional 100,000 end-strength cut on top of the 124,000.

The big question for each branch is "how do you cut?"

The obvious answer: with dignity. But with the current budget uncertainty, the services are forced to consider drawdown tools that are most cost-effective — selective early retirement, reduction-in-force boards, changes to high-year tenure, and others involuntary means.

Our nation should not forget that many of these servicemembers have deployed to Iraq and/or Afghanistan multiple times.

These same servicemembers have been told their performance has been nothing short of exemplary but now will be sent packing as part of the drawdown efforts.

How the services treat their troops in these difficult budget times will require balance, but most of all, dignity.

We don't want to return to what was done during periods of post-war drawdowns in the past, where many servicemembers not only had their careers cut short but also were forced out of their respective services through a process that provided them with little respect and dignity for their past service and sacrifice to the nation.

Previous force drawdowns left many former servicemembers with a bad taste in their mouth that they carry to this day, which came back to haunt the services in terms of future recruitment — critical to maintaining the all-volunteer force.

Former servicemembers are the best recruiters our armed forces have. So in the end, the nation is not doing itself any favors by not doing what is right.

I remember all too well during the 2003-04 drawdown as the Air Force chief of personnel policy on the Air Staff. The secretary's main theme throughout that drawdown was "voluntary"— our job was to use tools to get airmen to voluntarily leave the Air Force.

Fortunately, Congress has made sure voluntary tools (voluntary separation pay and temporary early retirement authority) still exist in the Pentagon's drawdown portfolio, but unfortunately, the involuntary tools are the cheaper option.

Providing voluntary measures will give servicemembers a choice and recognize their sacrifices over the past 12 years.

The bottom line: Services, treat your troops with dignity and use the tools.

Court Reverses Autism Ruling

During July of 2012, a federal judge ruled that TRICARE's limitation of autism therapy to children of active-duty personnel is "arbitrary and capricious." The court ordered TRICARE to cover Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) therapy as a covered benefit for all TRICARE beneficiaries, not just those on active duty.

Late last week, the same federal judge acknowledged the Court committed a "clear error" in its ruling, noting that it "should have remanded the case back to the Agency for further action."

The Judge has sent the case back to the DoD for review and reconsideration acknowledging that the Court's policy of permitting reconsideration allows "agencies to cure their own mistakes." Just how long that could take remains to be seen.

In the interim, the Judge notes that TRICARE will continue to provide ABA services under the interim guidance issued late last summer.

Military families looked to the court for action, and it appears, in the end, the Court is looking to Congress, “the Court hopes a final resolution to this matter will be hastened by the Congress’ recent directive to the agency to consider if coverage of ABA therapy under the basic program may be permitted.”

With no time limits set on the “reconsideration”, it is up to Congress and advocates to hold the DoD accountable.

The goal – and our challenge – remains to make this coverage a permanent benefit for our military families.

Are you surprised by the Judge’s decision? Tell us what you think?

MOAA Legislative Update, 21 June 2013:

Will Women Serve in Combat?

More combat positions could be open to women by 2016. On Tuesday, DoD released information on reviews of physical and other standards that could open up as many as 240,000 military positions (about one-fifth of the active-duty force) that have been off-limits to women.

Women currently make up about 15 percent of the military.

Despite the announcement, Pentagon leadership made it clear that they will move cautiously. They also noted that after the reviews are complete some positions will likely remain open only to men.

The House-passed defense bill includes a provision introduced by Hunter dictating gender-neutral standards for military positions.

Each of the four armed services, as well as special operations command, were required to outline their review plans this May for ending longstanding restrictions barring women from direct ground combat positions, with full implementation by 2016.

The services may request certain exemptions from gender integration after completion of their reviews. In announcing the plans, Dempsey said that the onus would be on the services to prove why an exception keeping a particular position closed to women was warranted.

The transition is just getting started, but MOAA will keep a close eye on the process to ensure that fighting effectiveness and equity among servicemembers are preserved.

Wounded Warrior Champion Departs

The MOAA Government Relations team bids farewell to CDR René Campos, USN (Ret), deputy director of Government Relations since 2004. Rene’ left the staff this week to become the Government Relations Manager with the Project Management Institute in Washington, D.C.

Over the past nine years, Campos led MOAA’s legislative slate for quality of life and family support issues while most recently, she had been MOAA’s representative concerning legislative issues in both the DoD and VA health care matters,

with specific responsibility for wounded warrior and veterans’ health care issues.

Campos is the architect behind MOAA’s highly acclaimed fall signature event, the “Warrior Family Symposium.”

In addition, Campos has been MOAA’s representative on several councils (the Exchange Retiree Advisory Council and the Commissary Patron Advisory Council), the VA Secretary’s Advisory Committee for Women Veterans and co-led the Morale Welfare and Recreation, Military Construction & BRAC Committee with The Military Coalition.

René, fair winds and following seas.

TRICARE Dental Contract Extended

TRICARE announced that they have extended the current TRICARE Retiree Dental Program (TRDP) contract – set to expire on September 30 – through December 31 of this year.

The move will bring it in-sync with the other healthcare contracts on a calendar year versus fiscal year basis.

The contract extension will bring no change in premiums or scope of benefits. However, the annual maximum allowable charge for enrollees in the Enhanced program will be increased to \$1,500 for this period. Those in the Basic program will see their maximum increase to \$1,250.

Those who have already reached their annual maximum can ask their dentists to resubmit claims.

Although the maximums are being increased, enrollees won’t be asked to pay a higher deductible. As a result of the contract extension beneficiaries won’t see their deductible start over on October 1; it will be extended until the end of the calendar year.

Delta Dental of California administers the current contract, and has been awarded a new five year contract that begins on January 1, 2014.

One important change coming to the TRDP is a requirement to pay via an electronic funds transfer (ETF) or government allotment. This change will come into effect for all beneficiaries on October 1, 2013.

As a reminder, those enrolled in the program can decrease their copayments for dental care by an average of 22% by seeing a dentist in the TRDP network.

Prime Referral Authorization Waiver Extended

We just received word that TRICARE is extending the temporary waiver for West Region Prime enrollees to get authorizations for specialty care referred by their primary care manager (PCM).

The waiver will now include specialty care referrals received from April 1 through July 2. TRICARE and UnitedHealthcare Military & Veterans have worked with the military hospitals and clinics to identify and address the issues that have caused the delays in referrals and authorizations.

Both United and DoD have vowed to ensure that effective solutions are in place and both anticipate the return to the normal referral and authorizations process without disruption in beneficiary services.

From Jay Leno: It was proposed this week that members of Congress use video conferencing and other remote technology to work from their home states instead of Washington. They figure they can get just as much ‘not done’ at home as they get ‘not done’ in Washington.



JAYHAWK CHAPTER MOAA

A membership meeting will be held **Wednesday, 17 July 2013**, at the Lawrence Country Club.
Dinner cost is \$22.00/meal.

The Program: Our guest speaker will be former Mayor and current Lawrence City Commissioner Mike Amyx, who will update us on the affairs of Lawrence.

Social Hour: 1800 hours Dinner: 1845 hours

The Menu: Chicken, baked potato, vegetable, rolls, salad, tea or coffee and dessert

Send your reservation and check payable to Jayhawk Chapter MOAA to arrive no later than **Thursday, 11 July 2013**, 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

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.kansasmooa.org

JAYHAWK CHAPTER WEBSITE: www.jayhawkmoaa.org

**Thank you for receiving
the newsletter via e-mail !!
It saves the Chapter for both
printing and postage.**

2013 Meeting Dates:

**** Wednesday 17 July 2013 ****

Tuesday

19 November 2013

Tuesday 17 September 2013

Tuesday

21 January 2014



One Association, One Voice. Yours.

Newsletter Editor

Jayhawk Chapter, MOAA

2403 Manchester Road

Lawrence, KS 66049-1646

FIRST CLASS MAIL

IN GOD WE TRUST