



Jayhawk Chapter MOAA Newsletter



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September Program:

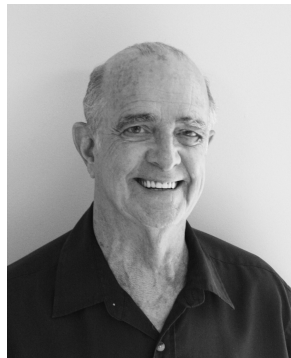
Our guest speaker will be Bill Lacy, Director of KU's Dole Institute of Politics. He has served in the Reagan White House, Worked on the Republican National Committee and served on the campaign staffs of Senator Dole and President H. W. Bush. He will discuss current goings-on at the Dole Institute and programs designed to engage military veterans.

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

★★★★★ CHAPTER
awarded for
2004 / 2006 / 2007

President's Corner . . .

Good news! Once again, Jayhawk Chapter will receive a five-star Levels of Excellence award at November's national meeting! Thanks to all of you who make this possible by your participation, and thanks to Bob Johnson for his leadership last year and for preparing a detailed and effective Levels of Excellence report. Let's continue the tradition next year by the things we do for our chapter this year.



Speaking of "things we do," the first two items in MOAA's "Chapter Self-Evaluation Checklist" are: (1) Does the chapter establish and publicize yearly goals? (2) Does the chapter follow up on and review its goals?

Answers:

(1) Yes: our goals for this year are to increase chapter membership and to increase the Comfort Scholarship.

(2) Following up on those is the job of each of us. Please find military people among your acquaintance and invite them to be your guests at next month's dinner. And please consider contributing \$100 this year to the Clayton Comfort Scholarship.

Dean

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1 September 2013

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



JAYHAWK CHAPTER NEWS

From Herschel Stroud:

Did anyone see **Jacque and Herschel Stroud** in the *Lawrence Journal World* coverage of the Quantrill Raid? We were at the Cemetery Friday and South Park Sunday. “We had much fun bringing John and Elizabeth Speer back to life. As they dug us up at Oak Hill Cemetery, brushed the dirt from our moldy clothes, and allowed us to recount some of the mayhem that occurred in Lawrence, August 21st of 1863.”

From the *Lawrence Journal-World*, 17 August: “The ghosts of abolitionist John Speer and his wife, Elizabeth Speer, stood next to their family’s tall stone monument in Oak Hill Cemetery Friday night. In the light of the moon and a small lantern, the two told about coming to Lawrence and living through William Quantrill’s infamous 1863 raid. With pride in his voice, Speer cried out, ‘Godspeed to you all and forever Lawrence,’ before he led his bride behind the large stone marking his grave and onto the darkened road that winds among the graves of many men and women with ties to the Civil War.”

From Jim Cooper – Visiting Lt Cooper in Greece and then packing her off to Japan!

Time with our daughter LT Cooper bookended our summer – it started on June 1st when we flew off to meet Veronica in Athens, for our first visit to Greece. After a long, 3-stop flight, we arrived in Athens and took a cab to our great rental apartment about 20 minutes’ walk from Acropolis Hill which allowed us to spend all next day exploring the Parthenon and the neighborhoods comprising the Plaka, which surround Acropolis Hill. The weather was great, crowds were minimal, and the scenery was great.

On our third day in Greece we flew down to Santorini, a beautiful volcanic caldera in the Cyclades group of the Greek islands. The scenery in Santorini is absolutely breathtaking, perhaps one of the most beautiful places we’ve seen on earth – the weather was perpetually clear and sunny, affording great views of the island and the dormant volcanic domes in the center of the volcanic sea. We spent five days luxuriating, poking



Coopers - Mt. Etna

around, sailing, shopping a bit, enjoying great food and wine and great Greek hospitality. We were truly sorry to leave, but we finally had to leave and we all took off for Sicily. We’ve enjoyed Sicily ever since our first assignment there, 30 years ago. On this trip we took a trip up nearly to the summit of Mount Etna – it was a clear day which permitted us a great view of the entire east coast of Sicily. The rest of our time in Sicily we poked around some old haunts and enjoyed more great food and wine, and eventually we had to come home and return to reality.



Coopers at Santorini

In early August, Veronica left Sicily and stopped by Lawrence for a couple of weeks of leave with us as she prepared to fly out to Yokota AB – she has now already reported aboard her new duty station, Naval Hospital Yokosuka, and her first weekend in country she joined some new shipmates to climb Mount Fuji (her third trip up Fuji in her young life)! We were stationed in Japan before moving to Lawrence in 1999, so she has fond memories, and we do plan to visit her before next summer!

NEW MEMBERS:

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**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 2013 Spring Semester set the bar high for the Jayhawk Battalion and prepared our Cadets for multiple training events during the summer break. Throughout last semester, Cadets conducted hands-on training, combining drills and Troop Leading Procedures learned in the classroom to execute tough realistic training. The purpose of all this field training was to prepare the Battalion's 21 Juniors (MS-III) Cadets for the Leadership Development Assessment Course (LDAC).

These training events also further developed the leadership and tactical skills of our freshmen and sophomore cadets.

The Leadership Development Assessment Course is conducted at Fort Lewis, Washington every summer. This summer training event brings together Cadets representing more than 272 college and university ROTC programs from all 50 states, two U.S. territories, the District of Columbia and the United Kingdom. This training is a required step in each Cadet's development and preparation for commissioning as a second lieutenant in the U.S. Army. Each Cadet undergoes a 29-day training cycle of scenario based training that tests the basic military skills that they have been learning in the classroom. Training included Garrison activities, Confidence Course, Field Leaders Reaction Course, Land Navigation (Day, and Night) and tactical Squad and platoon Training Exercises.



All training emphasized team building and leadership skill development. Cadets were provided guidance, assigned leadership responsibilities and allowed to exercise their leadership skills in a variety of positions ranging from squad leader to company commander. At the conclusion of each Cadet's Leadership opportunity they received individual developmental feedback in the form of counseling. These counseling provided the Cadet with the necessary corrective actions to take which ensured improvement in the Cadet's next leadership opportunity.



Cadets: Stork, Mohrbacher, Wilcox, McConnell during graduation from 2013 LDAC at Fort Lewis, Washington.

As always, thank you for your support in the Jayhawk Battalion. Check out our website at 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 3rd BDE ROTC featuring the KU 18th Annual RBC. Additionally, find us on Facebook <http://www.facebook.com/KUArmyROTC> and follow us on Twitter: http://twitter.com/KU_ArmyROTC *JAYHAWKS LEAD THE WAY!*

LTC Storm Reynolds

As long as there are final exams, they will never be able to eliminate prayer from schools.



Navy News

CAPT David Schweizer, USN

Greetings from the Jayhawk Navy!

The summer has come and gone too quickly here at KU NROTC. It has been a busy one as our Midshipmen have completed crucial summer training in the fleet on cruises as well as enriching themselves through continued academic studies on campus. Over the last few months, members of the Jayhawk Battalion have been aboard ships and submarines, as well as at Marine Officer Candidate School and Mountain Warfare Training. As you can expect from our future officers, their summers were quite productive.

One example of the unique opportunities our MIDN seized was in the Project GO language studies program. This scholarship allows select MIDN to attend language



classes at various college campuses throughout the country and abroad. In addition, a select few are allowed to attend language and cultural immersion in exotic locales. Pictured above are three of our MIDN on camelback in Morocco. One of them, MIDN 3/C Nick Castans said of his experience: "During our Project GO funded study abroad trip to Morocco, we covered two semesters of beginner Arabic in just two months. However, on each weekend, we traveled to a new city in Morocco. I personally traveled to eight different cities with other students that I met in the program, and went to two different cities for class trips. Now looking back on this adventure, I am extremely grateful for this opportunity and the positive impact that it will have on my future military career." These opportunities definitely put into perspective their training throughout their four years at KU.

classes at various college campuses throughout the country and abroad. In addition, a select few are allowed to attend language and cultural immersion in exotic

On another note, we will soon welcome aboard our newest group of young, aspiring 4/C MIDN. The Class of 2017 includes 19 MIDN who will be attending our Orientation and Indoctrination the week of 19 August. Pictured to the right is a scene from uniform issue during this year's O&I.

This year's training will include basic military drill, challenging physical activities, campus familiarization, and an



introduction to life in the Jayhawk Battalion, and as college freshman. O&I will help develop camaraderie and allow them an extra week to settle in to their new settings prior to arrival of the KU student body. Based on their outstanding high school grades and standardized test scores, our newest MIDN have once again set the bar higher than the class before them.

As we conclude another successful summer and charge forward into the 2013-2014 academic year, I would like to extend my appreciation for the continued support our local MOAA chapter gives to the future Navy and Marine Corps Officers here at KU. Thank you for all that you do to help the Jayhawk Battalion. Rock Chalk!

CAPT David Schweizer

When faced with impossible odds, the pessimist will complain he's spinning his wheels, while the optimist will say he's gaining momentum.



Air Force News *LtCol Brian Salmans, USAF*

Hello from Det 280, the Flying Jayhawk Wing,

I'll start off this update with an introduction: I am Lt Col Brian Salmans. I took command of the AFROTC Det 280 from Lt Col Montague Samuel on 17 Jul 13. Lt Col Samuel transferred to Barksdale AFB, LA, where he is assigned to the Air Force Global Strike Command. Before being assigned to the University of Kansas, I was in charge of Distance Learning Operations at the Air Command and Staff College at Maxwell AFB, AL. I have been in the USAF for 23 years as a Cyber Operations Officer (formerly known as a Communications-Computer Systems Officer). Over the last few years I have been in the Air Force education field, being sent to earn a Ph.D. in Information Systems from the University of North Texas and then applying that degree at the Air Command and Staff College. I was deployed as a Combat Advisor to the Afghan National Army in Kabul, Afghanistan from Feb 11-Feb 12. I am joined in Lawrence by my wife Kristin, two sons, and a daughter. We are looking forward to our time in Lawrence and at the University of Kansas.

We also welcomed back SSgt George White who was on temporary duty this summer at Camp Shelby, MS, working with other AFROTC detachment personnel during summer cadet field training. With the beginning of a new semester, we definitely are thankful for his return.

As with any hails, we have our farewells. As mentioned above, Lt Col Samuel departed for Louisiana. Additionally, Lt Col Brian Schroeder transferred back to Kessler AFB in Biloxi, MS, to rejoin his old unit, the 53rd Weather Reconnaissance Squadron Hurricane Hunters.

Detachment update:

We held our New Student Orientation on 23 Aug. We have one of our larger recruiting classes this fall.

The next big event is the University of Kansas' Salute to Service football game on Saturday, 7 Sep at 1800. All the KU ROTC Detachments will participate, including recognition of award winners at various breaks in the games. Information on this event can be viewed at KUTICKETS.COM (promo code SERVICE 2013 can be used to reserve discounted tickets).

The outstanding contributions of Det 280 Cadre and Cadets to the USAF ROTC program have been recognized in the form of two awards: Capt Ben Smith was recognized as the Outstanding Recruiting Flight Commander of the Year for the Northwest Region and Det 280 was the runner-up for the best small detachment in the Northwest Region. This recognition shows the outstanding leadership and teamwork within Det 280.

MOAA Jayhawk Chapter, thank you again for your support. Detachment 280 is looking forward to another great year educating and training our Air Force's future officers.

Very Respectfully,

Lt Col Brian Salmans

*Fathers are what give daughters away to other men who aren't good enough for them
... so they can have grandchildren that are smarter than anybody's.*

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, 08 March 2013:

Dole Foundation Helps MOAA Help Caregivers

MOAA received a Dole Foundation Innovation Grant this week to help a new MOAA project -- developing "Tips for Lifelong Caregiving," an on-line guide aimed at assisting caregivers of wounded, ill and injured servicemembers with financial, legal and other issues affecting their lives and well-being.

"We are honored to receive this grant to help us deliver much-needed support to the selfless caregivers who are sacrificing so much of their own lives to care for our wounded, ill and injured heroes," MOAA President Vice Adm. Norb Ryan, Jr. said. "In addition to information collected from six years conducting symposia and roundtable discussions, we are working with the caregivers themselves to craft a guide that builds on the lessons they've learned to ease the path for others."

MOAA is working on the project with two initial partners: USAA is providing expertise in the area of financial information, products and services, and the American Bar Association is adding its expertise in legal issues.

The Dole Foundation also announced this week that Google, Inc. has agreed to provide digital support services to MOAA and other Dole Foundation grant recipients.

MOAA will provide the labor, project management and hosting support to develop and implement the on-line guide. The tool will be available to the public and will augment existing programs sponsored by the Dole Foundation, DoD, VA and other agencies and individuals supporting caregivers.

Topics covered in the Guide will include:

- * Medical-disability insurance and benefits programs, including DOD, VA, Medicare-Medicaid, Social Security, caregiver support, aid and attendance, in-home and nursing care, and retirement and survivor programs
- * Guardianship and fiduciary matters
- * Powers of attorney
- * Advance directives
- * Legal pro-bono services and resources
- * Wills
- * Financial-estate planning
- * Delivery of the initial digital guide is planned for the end of June 2013.

MOAA Legislative Update, 15 March 2013:

MOAA, DoD Discuss TRICARE Rx Issues

MOAA President Vice Adm. Norbert R. Ryan Jr., USN (Ret), Government Relations Deputy Director Capt. Kathy Beasley, USN (Ret), and other association leaders met March 12 with several leaders of the TRICARE Management Authority (TMA), including TMA Deputy Director Brig. Gen. W. Bryan Gamble, USA, and DoD Pharmacy Chief Rear Adm. Thomas McGinnis, USPHS.

A chief topic was ongoing implementation of the one-year trial requirement for TRICARE For Life beneficiaries to obtain maintenance medication refills through the mail-order or military pharmacy systems.

TMA leaders said the first-year savings of the program was estimated by the Congressional Budget Office at \$150 million, with greater savings in the out-years.

Pharmacy expenditures comprise about 20 percent of DoD health care costs, and the mail-order system saves about 20 percent over retail costs.

TRICARE officials said the one-year trial requirement is unlikely to be implemented before late summer but will happen sometime before Oct. 1.

One issue raised by Ryan was the challenge some beneficiaries have encountered in securing prescription renewals through the mail-order system. Express Scripts Inc. representatives say they will contact a doctor to obtain a renewed prescription on the beneficiary's behalf, but experience is that if they have trouble getting the doctor on the phone, the renewal might not go through.

Ryan recommended that Express Scripts fax the renewal request to the doctor to reduce reliance on making telephone connections with busy doctors and their staffs.

Hearing Addresses VA Claims Problems

At a March 13 hearing, Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee Chair Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.), pointedly asked VA witnesses what evidence they can offer that the VA will meet its oft-stated goal of eliminating the disability claims backlog by 2015 and processing future claims within 125 days with a 98-percent assurance of accuracy.

How is TFL Funded?

Part of our mission here at MOAA is to provide our members with accurate and useful information. I'd like to take that on and provide (a high level description) of how the funding mechanism for TFL gets executed. TFL is a wonderful earned benefit designed for those over age 65 retired military members.

To recap some historical perspective, The Floyd D. Spence National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2001, directed the establishment of the Medicare-Eligible Retiree Health Care Fund (acronym is MERHCF), to pay for Medicare-eligible retiree health care beginning in 2002 via a new program called TRICARE for Life. Prior to this, as many will remember, care for this group of beneficiaries was on a space-available basis at most Military Treatment Facilities. The MERHCF covers Medicare-eligible beneficiaries, regardless of age – both those who are already over age 65 as well as future retirees and their families.

"The original 2001 legislation also established an independent three-member DoD MERHCF Board of Actuaries appointed by the Secretary of Defense. Here is where the funding mechanism comes into play – Accrual deposits into the Fund are made by the Services, Coast Guard, Public Health Service and NOAA to cover future TFL expenses for the currently serving members and families once they attain age 65, which can be two to four decades from now. The funds are transferred out and into the Defense Health Program based on estimates of the cost of care actually provided each year. There is a separate deposit to the trust fund that is made by the Treasury Department to cover the "unfunded liability" for those who are already retired.

As of Sept 30, 2011, the Fund had assets of over \$163.6 billion to cover future expenses. The accrual funds requested for 2013 were \$6.7 billion.

The oversight of the Fund resides within DoD and is reported on annually. The office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, through the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs has as one of its missions the operational oversight of the defense health program which includes the MERHCF. The Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) provides accounting and investment services for the fund.

MOAA Legislative Update, 22 March 2013:

MOAA Meets with New SecDef

On Thursday, Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel hosted the start of a two-day series of meetings between top Defense and Service officials and leaders of selected military and veterans organizations, including MOAA President Vice Adm. Norbert R. Ryan Jr., USN (Ret).

Hagel said he made it an early priority to meet with association leaders because, "Your organizations are the last bridge between the all-volunteer force and the rest of society."

"I want to meet regularly with you and look forward to engaging more with you than maybe has been done in the past," Hagel said. "I'll be direct and honest with you, and hope you will be with me."

Hagel particularly highlighted and expressed appreciation for Ryan's open letter to him on personnel and healthcare costs (cited in last week's legislative update).

Later in the day, senior DoD officials provided updates on a variety of programs and initiatives, with emphasis on sequestration, suicides, and veteran unemployment.

The newly passed continuing resolution still poses a \$43 billion sequester, but provides DoD new flexibility to avoid some of the worst-case scenarios. Assessing how to best use this new flexibility is getting priority focus. Senior defense officials reiterated sequestration will not affect ongoing operations in Afghanistan.

In his turn, Admiral Ryan urged Secretary Hagel to seek new opportunities to generate savings through joint delivery of healthcare (rather than higher beneficiary fees) and continue working with VA Secretary Shinseki to ease transition and claims problems.

MOAA is pleased at Secretary Hagel's initiative in convening this meeting and his engaging, open dialogue with association leaders. At this first meeting, the new Secretary gave every indication he "gets it."

Shutdown Averted Tuition Assistance Restored

The House and Senate passed a continuing resolution on Thursday that will keep the government funded through the end of the September and give DoD at least some wiggle room in deciding how to take \$43 billion in sequester cuts to the defense budget over the next six months.

MOAA Legislative Update, 29 March 2013:

Senate on TRICARE, SBP, Concurrent Receipt

For the first time in four years, the Senate passed a budget resolution (S. Con. Res 8) outlining spending limits and priorities for the next fiscal year.

Among other things, it envisions repealing the Medicare payment formula that now requires a 27-percent cut in Medicare and TRICARE payments as of Jan. 1, 2014.

On issues directly affecting the military and veterans community, the resolution included provisions concerning:

- expanding eligibility for concurrent receipt of military retired pay and VA disability compensation;
- ending the deduction of VA survivor benefits from Survivor Benefit Plan annuities;
- protecting VA benefits from COLA cuts, including the "chained CPI" suggested by many COLA critics;
- extending VA health care coverage to qualifying dependent children until age 26; and
- improving veterans' access to health care in rural areas.

MOAA applauds the efforts of multiple senators who worked to include the latter provisions in the budget resolution.

But it's important to understand it will be an uphill battle to get these changes into law.

First, most were included in "contingent reserve fund" provisions. That means the sponsoring senator would like to see it happen, but it would have to be done on a budget-neutral basis — meaning something else must be cut to pay for it.

That's why Congress hasn't done these things in the past — unwillingness to make the offsetting cuts.

Second, the House-passed budget resolution reflects dramatically different budget priorities than the Senate's.

Given those dramatic differences, the likelihood of House and Senate leaders reaching a compromise seems slim.

What's different this year is a recent law change to suspend congressional salaries if each chamber failed to pass a budget resolution.

They've each now done that now, so their pay is safe. There was no penalty if they failed to agree.

Staying Engaged on Wounded Warriors

Two troubling stories recently made the news—these are real people with heart-breaking situations—stories that make you want to get up and do something to help these transitioning heroes and their families.

This requires a Call to Action on all our parts.

MOAA believes there must be a sense of urgency in addressing these military, veteran and family needs.

To do otherwise? ... "Will only heightened the health, economic, and social issues [posed by the number of people affected, the rapid draw down of troops from Iraq/Afghanistan], and the long-term effects for troops, veterans, their families, and the nation," according to the IOM.

MOAA will be addressing these issues and many other related issues at this year's Annual Warrior-Family Symposium, co-hosted by MOAA and the National Defense Industrial Association (NDIA).

Please SAVE THE DATE and stay tuned for more information on:

- Mental Health,
- Linking Warriors and Their Families,
- Government & Society
- Thursday, September 12, 2013,
- Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center

MOAA Legislative Update, 05 April 2013:

What's Next for Tuition Assistance?

The plug was pulled on military tuition assistance recently, but thanks to two Senators it's been re-booted at least until September 30.

Even so, it may take time for the Services to re-start the program. And, TA monies will still be pared back by about 7.8% to match "sequestration" rules. That's a Latin word for "stupid," but at least some lawmakers are trying to craft ways to restore some of the more draconian cuts to military programs.

After this year, all bets may be off the table on TA. TA could be restricted by skill, dollar amount or the ubiquitous "needs of the Service." What if you're forced to use your Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits on active duty or are considering doing that now?

The new GI Bill pays up to the full-cost of attendance at any public college or university for full-time study, or up to \$18,077.50 for study at a private school. The good news is that if you choose to go to college off-duty and pick the right school, you may not have to pay a dime for your courses.

You can also get up to \$1,000 per year for books. Less if you take just one or two courses.

There's a housing allowance, too, but sorry, you can't draw your current housing benefit plus the GI Bill housing allowance at the same time.

There are some things to think about in planning to use your new GI Bill while still serving on active duty.

Part-time study

Given the pace of operations today, most servicemembers only have time to take 3-6 credits – one or two courses – at a time. Here's how the "burn rate" works using your new GI Bill on a part-time basis. First, everyone gets 36 months of benefits under the new GI Bill. Public college tuition is fully paid based on 3 years' active duty; lower rates for less active service.

The Dept. of Veterans Affairs (VA) charges entitlement based on the ratio of the student's course load to the number of credits required for full-time training. For example, if a soldier pursues 12 credit hours (where 12 hours is full time) for a four-month long semester, VA will charge the individual one day for each day in the enrollment period (4 months of entitlement). However, if the same troop was only enrolled in seven hours, VA would charge the individual seven-twelfths of a day for each day in the enrollment (2 months and 10 days of entitlement).

In plain language, if a servicemember averages two 3-credit courses per semester, the burn rate would be two months per semester or four months for the year. At the end of the year, the military member would have 32 months of benefits remaining: $36 - 4 = 32$ months of new GI Bill left.

Non-degree training

Let's say you want to take non-degree courses towards a civilian license as an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) or Microsoft Certified Engineer. In those situations, benefits are capped at an annual dollar amount by law. VA charges entitlement based on the amount of benefits paid divided by one-twelfth of the cap amount. For example, if the annual cap was \$12,000, an individual would be charged one month of entitlement for every \$1,000 received.

Transferred Benefits

If TA is suspended again and you've already transferred some or all of your GI Bill months of entitlement, are you stuck? Once a Transfer Account is set up, you can move around your

entitlement or cancel it. If you transferred 18 months to a spouse and another 18 to a child, you can re-arrange the accounts; e.g., you want to be more competitive for promotion by finishing a degree, in this example you could take back 6 months each from your dependents. If you don't have a Transfer Account, keep in mind that your Service owns 'transferability' as a carrot to induce you to serve longer, and you must have completed 6 years' service and agree to serve 4 more years to have the right to transfer new GI Bill benefits.

Getting Ready to Get Out

If you are wrapping up your service obligation, retiring, or in the crosshairs for being RIF'd, your options for transferring your GI Bill benefits can be tricky. The key thing to remember is, once you separate — voluntarily or otherwise — you're once and done and can no longer transfer your benefits, if eligible to do so. For those who expect to be caught up in the draw down, you should consider transferring your benefits if you have no plans to use them. If you get RIF'd, you won't have to serve the extra four years' service after completing the required six years' service.

Once you separate or retire, you'll have 15 years to use your remaining GI Bill benefits. And once you're enrolled in a program, the housing allowance will kick in if you served three years' active duty. The housing rate is pegged to the E-5 With Dependents rate at the zip code where the college or university is located.

For more information, go to the VA GI Bill homepage or check out the Frequently Asked Questions page there.

Did Your CRSC Increase?

Some Combat-Related Special Compensation (CRSC) retirees saw their monthly CRSC payments increase on April 1 as a result of a change in the FY2013 National Defense Authorization Act.

Dubbed the "CRSC-Glitch" fix, Senate concurrent receipt champion and Majority Leader, Harry Reid (D-NV), added the legislative provision to the defense bill that eliminated a CRSC calculation glitch that affected many combat-disabled retirees effective 1 January 2013.

According to Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) officials, the April increase is the new, prospective amount retirees will now receive. DFAS is still determining the retroactive amounts (currently under review) and will send letters to affected retirees over the next few months.

Military Coalition Elects New Leader

At the April 4 meeting of The Military Coalition (TMC), the 34 member organizations unanimously elected incoming MOAA Government Relations Director Col Mike Hayden, USAF (Ret) as Coalition Co-Chair – replacing outgoing MOAA Government Relations Director Col Steve Strobbridge, USAF (Ret), who has served in that capacity since April 2001.

"This unanimous election reflects the Coalition members' confidence and respect for Mike Hayden, who has been a mainstay of the Coalition for many years as Co-Chair of TMC's Retired Affairs Committee," said Joe Barnes, National Executive Director of the Fleet Reserve Association, who holds the other TMC Co-Chair position. "With Steve retiring at the end of April, we all recognize that Mike is especially well-qualified to fill his shoes as TMC co-chair. I look forward to working closely with him."

New Lobbyist at MOAA

MOAA welcomes new Deputy Director of Government Relations COL Mike Barron, USA (Ret) to our team on April 8.

Since his retirement from active duty in 2010, Barron has worked in Boeing's Washington, D.C. Government Operations Office, first as Director of Government Relations and then as Director of International Operations and Policy. He came to MOAA to follow his passion of serving the military community.

A veteran of Operation Iraqi Freedom, his last active duty assignment was as Special Assistant to the Secretary of the Army. Before that, he served two tours on the Joint Staff, including four years as Assistant and Staff Director for Legislative Affairs to the Chairman.

He also has served as an infantry battalion commander, as Army liaison to the U.S. Senate, and as a congressional fellow for then-Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich in the mid-1990s.

Mike's wife Patty previously was on the staff of the National Military Family Association and currently is in charge of family programs for the Association of the U.S. Army.

We're extremely pleased and fortunate to welcome Mike Barron to the Government Relations team.

MOAA Legislative Update, 12 April 2013:

Defense Budget: TRICARE Fees, Pay Caps

President Obama released the administration's FY2014 defense budget proposal on Wednesday – including \$43 billion in cuts aimed at reducing our nation's debt.

His proposal reduces outyear spending more moderately than the sequestration budget cuts required by current law. Overall, the proposed budget is an attempt at a "grand bargain" on debt reduction.

To reach that elusive grand bargain, the 2014 budget includes the adoption of a "Chained CPI" (C-CPI) formula for reducing cost of living adjustments (COLA) on military retirement, VA disability, Social Security benefits, and other federal annuities, as well as increasing taxes on corporations and wealthy persons.

The DoD budget request totals \$526.6 billion and lowers spending for weapons systems, caps the 2014 military pay raise at 1%, proposes a new round of base closures in 2015, and seeks dramatically higher TRICARE fees.

The Pentagon is again seeking to reduce TRICARE health care costs by increasing enrollment fees, co-pays and deductibles for military retirees, shifting \$25 billion in costs to military beneficiaries over 10 years. Specifically the proposal would:

- Increase annual TRICARE fees by \$1,000 or more for retired families of all ages, including new enrollment fees for TRICARE Standard and TRICARE For Life (TFL)
- Means-test TRICARE Prime and TFL fees, based on retired pay
- Double most pharmacy copays
- Require all beneficiaries except active duty members to get maintenance medication refills through the mail-order system or in military pharmacies

The proposed 1% military pay raise is little more than half the 1.8% raise experienced by the average American (the standard for annual military raises under current law).

The chained-CPI COLA would depress annual retired pay, Social Security, and other COLAs by about 0.3 percent per year – which can compound to impose significant cuts over time.

President Proposes Increased VA Funding

At a budget roll out briefed on Wednesday, VA Secretary Eric Shinseki and officials reviewed details of the \$152.7 billion VA budget proposal for FY2014.

Shinseki emphasized the President's continued investment in caring for and supporting our veterans and their families as evidenced by this year's increase of over \$14 billion in the budget as compared to FY2013 spending levels.

Some targeted priorities for the department include:

- \$54.6 billion for protecting critical medical care in the current fiscal year, and an additional \$55.6 billion in advanced appropriations for VA medical care in FY2015 to maintain continuity of care
- \$7 billion to strengthen mental health care services
- \$1.4 billion to combat veteran homelessness
- \$799 million for facility renovations and new construction projects
- \$586 million to support medical and prosthetic research
- \$136 million to implement a paperless claims processing system
- \$104 million to support veteran employment and transition assistance to civilian life

The VA has requested a 13.6 percent increase in the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) program to support the completion of 1.3 million disability compensation and pension claims.

A significant portion of VBA's funding increase will go toward technical enhancements to the electronic disability processing system which is a cornerstone of VA transformation efforts and a key to eliminating the claims backlog.

MOAA Legislative Update, 19 April 2013:

MOAA Storms the Hill for You

MOAA Council and Chapter Presidents from all 50 states, 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 17 to visit nearly all 535 representatives and senators in support of key legislative priorities.

This year, the "Hill-stormers" met with their legislators, discussed the issues, provided fact sheets and brochures, and asked them to:

- Sustain the 1.8% active duty pay raise
- Reject disproportional TRICARE fee hikes
- Address remaining inequities for disabled retirees, surviving spouses, and Guard/Reserve retirees

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 FY2014 Defense Authorization Bill in the coming weeks.

We're also gratified at members' response to the alert we sent last Friday asking you to support this effort by emailing your legislators. You sent nearly 25,000 messages to Capitol Hill, and many legislators and staffers referenced the messages during their meetings with the MOAA stormers.

MOAA Stands Up for Beneficiaries at Senate Hearing

At an April 17 hearing before the Senate Armed Services Personnel Subcommittee, MOAA Government Relations Director Col. Steve Strobidge (USAF-Ret) made his final Hill appearance count, mounting a strong defense against capping military pay raises and imposing dramatic TRICARE fee hikes.

The hearing was the first for new subcommittee Chair Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), as well as for new subcommittee members Sens. Tim Kaine (D-VA) and Angus King (I-ME).

Gillibrand noted the challenges the committee faces, and noted her particular interest in ensuring implementation of new therapy requirements for beneficiaries with autism, and with addressing the problem of sexual assault in the military. On the latter issue, she challenged a DoD witness who recommended relying on the chain of command to “maintain good order and discipline.” “The current chain of command has 19,000 sexual assaults per year,” Gillibrand bristled. “That’s not good order and discipline.”

At the outset of the hearing, Ranking Minority Member Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-SC) noted, “I’m very interested in TRICARE,” noting costs have increased from \$19 billion in 2001 to \$49.4 billion for FY14. “To the beneficiary community, I certainly want to listen to your concerns,” he said. “...But I’m looking for sustainability.”

When his turn came, Strobridge sought to address that concern, noting that DoD health cost growth peaked in 2002-2003 and has been declining ever since – with less than 1 percent cost growth in FY12, and further decline in FY13. He also noted DoD has diverted \$2.5 billion in surplus funds from the healthcare account to other needs over the last three years.

“So the ‘exploding cost’ claim,” Strobridge said, “is built on a 10-year-old data point.”

He took issue with assertions that military retirees pay far less for health care than civilians do, calling such statements “aggravating” to the military community.

“When someone says that to me, I answer, ‘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 wherever the next fight is?’”

Strobridge called the proposal to means-test TRICARE Prime and TRICARE For Life fees “patent discrimination against the military,” noting no other federal retiree has his or her health benefits means-tested. “Under that perverse system, the longer and more successfully you serve, the worse your benefit.”

Later in the hearing, Strobridge engaged in dialogues with Sen. Kelly Ayotte (R-NH) on ways DoD can cut costs with raising fees or affecting quality care delivery, with Sen. Kaine on means-testing and past experience with budget-driven benefit cuts, and with Sen. King on the nature of the military “contract” and what currently serving people are told about what benefits they can expect as retirees.

Honoring Veterans

At an April 16 House Veterans Affairs Committee hearing, MOAA Deputy Director of Government Relations, COL Bob Norton (USA-Ret), expressed MOAA strong support for the bipartisan Honor America’s Guard and Reserve Retirees Act (H.R. 679) introduced by Reps. Tim Walz (D-MN) and Jon Runyan (R-NJ).

This bill would allow all career reservists to stand and be recognized as fellow veterans on Veterans Day, Memorial Day and other patriotic celebrations.

Strange as it may sound, some career National Guard and Reserve service members who performed military duties at home and overseas during decades of service are not “veterans” under the law.

Reservists may be called to duty under 29 different types of orders. But unless the orders are issued under Title 10 active duty authority – a career reservist entitled to Reserve retired pay, TRICARE and other retiree benefits – is not a veteran of the Armed Forces.

In the last two sessions of Congress, the House passed legislation to recognize such career reserve retirees as veterans (without award of any veteran’s benefits). But the bills died in the Senate.

Norton quoted a letter from a retired New York Army National Guard Master Sergeant: “I served 35 years as a Guardsman and am told I am not a veteran. I did two weeks at Ground Zero [the World Trade Center, Sept. 11, 2001] and many tours in Germany doing logistics for the war in Iraq. Yet I am still not a veteran.”

Other bills considered at the hearing included:

- H.R. 570 (Rep. Runyan) would authorize automatic annual COLAs for veterans’ compensation, pension and survivor indemnity compensation (DIC) based on any annual adjustment to Social Security payments.
- H.R. 569 (Rep. Runyan) would authorize the COLA for next year, effective with payments on 1 January 2014.
- H.R. 671, the Ruth Moore Act (Rep. Chellie Pingree, D-ME) would revise the procedures for determining service-connection for a mental health condition caused or aggravated by a sexual assault on active duty. The bill would adopt the same procedures used to determine Post-Traumatic Stress disabilities with military sexual assault cases.
- H.R. 894 (Rep. Bill Johnson, R-OH) would revise and improve the laws governing the appointment and supervision of fiduciaries by the VA to administer benefits for severely disabled veterans.

March COLA Announced

The March CPI of 229.323 is 1.1% above the FY2013 COLA baseline of 226.936.

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.



JAYHAWK CHAPTER MOAA



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

The Program: Our guest speaker will be Bill Lacy, Director of KU's Dole Institute of Politics. He will discuss current goings-on at the Dole Institute and programs designed to engage military veterans.

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

The Menu: Pork loin with Marsala sauce, 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, 12 September 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.

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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.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:

Tuesday	17 September 2013
Tuesday	19 November 2013
Tuesday	21 January 2014



One Association, One Voice. Yours.

Newsletter Editor

Jayhawk Chapter, MOAA

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IN GOD WE TRUST