



# 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 Derek Kwan,  
Executive Director of the Lied Center of Kansas

★★★★★ CHAPTER  
awarded for

2002 / 2003 / 2005 / 2008  
2009 / 2010 / 2011 / 2012

★★★ CHAPTER  
awarded for

2004 / 2006 / 2007

## President's Comments. . .

Even though summer is upon us, I hope that everyone is closely following the discussions in Washington concerning the future of the DoD Budget with a focus on the proposed changes to military compensation and benefits. As all of us who have served know, it is the quality of our people that determines the success of every mission. MOAA, as the premier advocate for military personnel, will be a major voice in shaping this national debate. We in Jayhawk can play a role in this debate by using the information provided to us by MOAA to help in developing our personal opinions and making them known to our elected representatives. Of particular help in this effort to keep informed is the information from MOAA shared by John Halladay via email. I strongly recommend that you read these.



I want to apologize for an error in my last Comments. The Jayhawk Chapter was recognized at the recent Storming of the Hill event with an award as the Second Runner-up for Best Electronic Newsletter. I mistakenly credited John and Shirley with this accomplishment when the actual credit should have gone to Stan Sneegas. So again my apologies to both the Halladays and Stan and our thanks for all they contribute to the Chapter.

I want to remind everyone about our July dinner meeting on Tuesday the 15th at the Lawrence Country Club where our guest speaker will be the new Executive Director of the Lied Center, Derek Kwan. This promises to be a very enjoyable and informative evening. I look forward to seeing you there.

*Ed*

Volume XIX, Issue 4

1 July 2014

### Staff:

#### President:

RADM H. Edward Phillips, USN (Ret)

#### 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President:

LCDR Michael R. Miller, USN (Ret)

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-President:

MAJ Andrew D. Bauch, USAF

#### Secretary:

COL John W. Halladay, USA (Ret)

#### Treasurer:

CAPT James S. Cooper, USN (Ret)

#### Past-President:

COL E. Dean Bevan, USA (Ret)

#### Directors:

COL E. Dean Bevan, USA (Ret)

Col John Mosher, USAFR (Ret)

LTC Gerald Rutledge, USA (Ret)

LTC Michael R. Devlin, USA (Ret)

CAPT David Schweizer, USN, ROTC

#### Newsletter Editors:

COL John & Shirley Halladay

#### Web Master:

Lt Col Stanley Sneegas, USAF (Ret)

## Inside this issue:

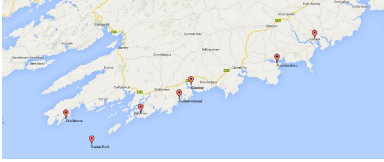
July Program	1
President's Message	1
Jayhawk Chapter News	2
Army News	2
Navy News	3
Air Force News	4
MOAA Legislative Updates	5
Dinner Reservation Form	11
MOAA calendar & websites	12

**\* Reservations should be sent  
to Jim Cooper by  
09 July**



## JAYHAWK CHAPTER NEWS

**From Dean Bevan:** Judy and I were in Ireland in May, and sailed a Hanse 35 sailboat along the south coast from Kinsale to Crookhaven and back, about 130 miles. We rounded the Fastnet Rock. Our last day's sail was in Force 7 winds, which helped focus our attention. I'm writing an article for Cruising World magazine describing the week.



**From David Kent:** In mid-May we drove to Abilene, TX for the retirement of our son, Lt. Col. Peter Kent, from the U.S. Air Force. He had served 23 years, the last 18 years as a Weapons System Officer on the B-1 bomber, accumulating over 2300 flying hours. Following a 4-year tour as Asst. Director for Plans in USAFE at Ramstein AFB, Germany (including a deployment to Kabul, Afghanistan), he returned to Dyess AFB in Abilene for his final tour of duty. From Oct 2013 to Mar 2014 he served with a deployed squadron of B-1s in Qatar.



Peter graduated from Virginia Tech in 1991 and earned his commission through AFROTC. I commissioned him in July 1991 at Ft. Leavenworth, in the Trophy Lounge at the former home of CGSC, Bell Hall, where my father had retired from the Army in 1960 and where I received my last promotion (to COL) in 1984. Peter, his wife Sandra, and our grandchildren Rachel (12) and Colin (11) continue to reside in Abilene.

**From John & Shirley Halladay:** We had a most enjoyable evening on 14 June celebrating the Army's 239<sup>th</sup> Birthday at Crown Center in Kansas City.

### NEW MEMBER:

Mitchell, Anthony "Tony" E., CAPT USN RET  
 4616 Royal Birkdale Court  
 Lawrence, KS 66049  
 785-424-7253 [amitchell317@gmail.com](mailto:amitchell317@gmail.com)  
 Spouse: Susan



## *Army News* **MAJ Davis McElwain, USA**

### Greetings Jayhawk Chapter!

The Spring Semester has come to an end for the Jayhawk Battalion, concluding with the commissioning of the class of 2014. This semester has been filled with tradition, excellence and high standards, all in preparation for this summer's upcoming training. We Build Leaders!

The hallmark of the semester, graduation and commissioning, saw 15 of our best and brightest cadets commissioning in service to our nation. These 15 new

Lieutenants were honored on the field of Memorial Stadium and then in the shadow of the Campanile on Monday the 19<sup>th</sup> of May, 2014. We, the cadre of the University of Kansas Army ROTC, were on hand to show our respect and support for these fine new officers and wish them luck in what will be incredible careers with the Active Duty Army, National Guard and Reserve Officer Corps.

The Graduates are:

- 2LT Andrew Acosta
- 2LT Courtney Brungardt
- 2LT Dale Colegrove
- 2LT Lawrence Flanagan
- 2LT Andrew Grieve
- 2LT Seth Hemker
- 2LT Stuart McConnell
- 2LT Jessica McCoy
- 2LT Deaven Miller
- 2LT Danny Portillo
- 2LT Austin J. Simons
- 2LT Daniel Stork
- 2LT Howard Ting
- 2LT Bobbi Walden
- 2LT Madeline Wilcox

nearby, as he moved to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers office in Kansas City. MAJ Davis McElwain, a member of the MOAA Jayhawk Chapter and Lawrence native, was selected to replace LTC Reynolds and arrived in June. In joining the Jayhawk Battalion, he brings recent combat experience, as he returned from a deployment to Southeast Afghanistan with 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division in March. If you want to contact him or have questions about the KU Army ROTC program, he can be reached at [davis.mcelwain@ku.edu](mailto:davis.mcelwain@ku.edu)

Cadet Summer Training is well underway with one cadet attending Airborne school and one attending Air Assault training, three cadre members evaluating at the Leadership Development and Assessment Course (LDAC), three cadets attending the Leaders Training Course (LTC), five cadets attending the Cultural Understanding, Language Proficiency (CULP) training in various countries, and 18 MS IIIs (Juniors) receiving their most rigorous evaluations yet from the LDAC Cadre at Fort Knox, KY. We are confident they will bring pride to the Jayhawk Battalion as they return from camp to take their place as MS IVs (Seniors) this fall.

As always, thank you for your support to the Jayhawk Battalion.

Check out our website at [www.armyrotc.ku.edu](http://www.armyrotc.ku.edu) for more information and details on upcoming events.

Additionally, find us on Facebook <http://www.facebook.com/KUArmyROTC> and follow us on Twitter: <http://twitter.com/KUArmyROTC>

**JAYHAWKS LEAD THE WAY!**



Shortly after graduation and commissioning, LTC Storm Reynolds bid farewell to the Jayhawk Battalion but stayed

**MAJ Davis McElwain**



**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 to the left 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.

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 into 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***



## ***Air Force News***

### ***LtCol Brian Salmans, USAF***

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

The staff and cadets culminated a great year with the commissioning of eleven new Second Lieutenants into the Air Force. On Monday, 19 May 14, at the Joint Commissioning Ceremony we commissioned:

Nathan Berndt - Pilot  
 Kayla Benson - Nurse  
 McKenna Hall - Pilot  
 Megan Honeywell -Nurse  
 Julian McCafferty – Development Engineer  
 James Sellers – Development Engineer  
 Margaret Schuetz – Missile Operations  
 Emily Thompson - Pilot  
 Tyler Underwood – Space Operations  
 Hanna Young - Nurse  
 Yinglong Xu – Missile Operations

At the commissioning ceremony, Second Lieutenant Julian McCafferty, was selected as the 2014 recipient of the Chancellor John Fraser Distinguished Military Graduate Award in recognition of outstanding achievement as an ROTC cadet. The recipient of the award exemplifies academic excellence, leadership, physical fitness and dedication to community service.

We are extremely proud of these officers and are thankful they have committed to serve the United States in the USAF.

Additionally, we have eight cadets attending Field Training during the summer. Field Training is conducted every summer and entails 22 days 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). This period is one of the most important times for cadets in AFROTC.

Supporting these Field Training camps are Lt Nathaniel Cunningham and SSgt George White. They will spend approximately six weeks as part of the cadre staff in Mississippi.

Congratulations are in order for SSgt George White who has been selected for promotion to Technical Sergeant. Also Lieutenant Nathaniel Cunningham will pin-on Captain in July.

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.

Major Benjamin Smith will PCS to Offutt Air Force Base, Omaha, Nebraska in July. He will be part of the USSTRATCOM J9 team. We appreciate the outstanding efforts of Maj Smith and the significant contributions he has made to the lives of the cadets and dozens of outstanding

officers in the USAF.

The fall academic term will start before long. Det 280 will hold a new student orientation (NSO) on 22 Aug 14 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. We expect a large freshmen class this fall and have had many prospective cadets and their parents visiting the Detachment this summer.

We are ever thankful for the outstanding support of MOAA to our cadets and to officers and enlisted. We recognize the importance of MOAA to the well-being of our officers, enlisted, and the Department of Defense in today's turbulent times.

Very Respectfully,

*Lt Col Brian Salmans*  
Commander, Air Force ROTC Det 280

## 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, 02 May 2014:

#### TRICARE Fees, Housing Cuts Rejected

At an April 30 hearing, the House Armed Services Military Personnel Subcommittee revealed its version of the FY 2015 defense authorization bill (H.R. 4435).

The Military Personnel Subcommittee's mark differs significantly from the administration's FY 2015 defense budget proposal, and provides some early optimism on TRICARE fees, the commissary benefit, and the housing allowance. Here's how the bill addresses key MOAA concerns:

- \* TRICARE Fees: rejects the administration's proposals to hike TRICARE fees for beneficiaries of all ages, eliminate TRICARE Prime, and consolidate health care options for beneficiaries under age 65.
- \* Housing: rejects the administration's proposal to increase servicemembers' out-of-pocket housing costs.
- \* Pay: remains silent on the administration's proposal to cap the 2015 active duty pay raise at 1 percent. Current law ties the annual military pay raise to rate of private sector pay growth (1.8 percent). However, the law also allows the President to implement an alternative pay raise, an authority he exercised last year.
- \* Commissary: The subcommittee rejected the reduction in the commissary benefit this year but indicated that it could support future changes by directing the SecDef to conduct a review of the commissary system.

Other key personnel-related provisions include:

- \* continued force reductions within established drawdown plans
- \* report on the Defense Health Agency's structure
- \* protection of child custody arrangements for deployed servicemembers
- \* additional study and reporting of servicemember and family member suicide

The subcommittee draft is the first step in the annual defense bill process. The full committee is scheduled to consider the defense bill next week, with the Senate starting the process shortly thereafter.

### Report Highlights TRICARE Access Challenges

On April 28, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) released a report outlining the challenges of identifying and addressing healthcare access problems for many TRICARE beneficiaries.

GAO studied DoD's processes, procedures, and metrics used to determine the adequacy of healthcare access for TRICARE beneficiaries using the Standard, Extra, and Reserve options.

The report found the lack of established access standards for these programs results in an under coordinated and uneven approach to assessing and addressing healthcare access issues from region to region. This leaves DoD unable to determine if the 2.2 million beneficiaries using these programs have adequate access to care.

The report is especially concerning in the wake of the administration's proposal to eliminate TRICARE Prime (the proposal was rejected by a key House panel). Prime is the only option that guarantees health care access.

The GAO recommends that DoD enhance existing guidance for TRICARE Regional Offices to better assess beneficiaries' access to care. DoD announced that they agreed with the GAO's recommendation.

MOAA will follow the implementation of DoD's new standards to measure healthcare access to ensure that beneficiaries have adequate access to the network.

### MOAA Legislative Update, 09 May 2014:

#### Key Committee Rejects Personnel Cuts

The House Armed Services Committee followed the lead of the Personnel Subcommittee and rejected administration proposals to increase TRICARE fees, cut the active duty pay raise, the commissary benefit, and increase out-of-pocket housing costs when it passed its version of the FY 2015 defense authorization bill on May 7.

The committee's mark paves a path for Congress to block these proposals this year, though much depends on the Senate's deliberations later this month. The bill addresses several key MOAA concerns:

**TRICARE Fees:** rejects the administration's proposals to hike TRICARE fees for beneficiaries of all ages, eliminate TRICARE Prime, and consolidate health care options for beneficiaries under age 65.

**Housing:** rejects the administration's proposal to increase servicemembers' out-of-pocket housing costs.

**Pay:** Supports a 1.8 percent pay raise to keep pace with private sector wage growth. However, current law allows the president to implement an alternative pay raise, an authority he exercised last year. The Committee also supports a pay freeze for flag and general officers in FY 2015.

**Commissary:** The committee rejected the reduction in the commissary benefit this year but indicated calls for an outside review of the commissary system to identify future budget savings. Other key personnel-related provisions include:

- \* improving sexual assault prevention and prosecution – including the elimination of the “good soldier defense”
- \* \$45 million for behavioral and mental health programs for Special Forces
- \* report on the Defense Health Agency's structure
- \* protection of child custody arrangements for deployed servicemembers
- \* additional study and reporting of servicemember and family member suicide

#### **MOAA Legislative Update, 16 May 2014:**

##### MOAA Counters Service Chiefs

Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman Carl Levin (D-Mich.) asked MOAA to address a number of discrepancies between testimony provided by MOAA and the Joint Chiefs of Staff at a May 6 hearing. This week MOAA responded to the committee and addressed three key areas.

##### Lost Purchasing Power

MOAA analysis shows a sergeant (E-5) with a family of four would lose an average of \$5,000 in purchasing power if the FY 2015 budget proposal is fully enacted.

During the hearing the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO), Admiral Jonathan Greenert (USN), asserted that analysis of “literal pay” reflects a 4 percent loss of purchasing power, or \$2,500.

But follow up analysis shows the CNO included only pay caps and changes to the housing allowance. But the comparison ignores the impact of cuts to the commissary subsidy and new out-of-pocket health care costs for active duty military families.

MOAA remains concerned that the Pentagon is repeating some of the very same mistakes that led to significant recruiting and retention problems in the late 90s and would negate the needed compensation improvements Congress implemented since 2000 to match the extraordinary demands and sacrifices of military service and a military career.

What's needed is to sustain pay and benefits for the men and women in uniform and their families as well as those that have faithfully served two decades or more.

##### The Survey Says?

May 15, 2014

By Col. Mike Hayden, USAF (Ret)

There's no doubt sequestration places uniformed service leaders in a difficult position, a position MOAA believes, if continued, would put national security at risk.

Sequestration has the Pentagon uniformed and civilian leaders attempting to balance a budget that is taking a topline cut of \$1 trillion over 10 years. Based on that burden, the Pentagon has put everything on the table to find savings — including the pay and benefits needed to sustain the all-volunteer force.

In a May 6 hearing, the Joint Chiefs testified side-by-side before the full Senate Armed Services Committee and unanimously defended pay and benefits proposals that “slow the growth” of personnel cost growth by shifting costs onto currently serving members and retirees and their families.

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Army Gen. Martin Dempsey told the senators, “We've been tasked to reduce the defense budget by up to \$1 trillion over 10 years while upholding our sacred obligation to properly train, equip, and prepare the force.”

Dempsey said all of the Joint Chiefs and all of the services' senior enlisted leaders support the proposals to “rebalance military compensation.”

##### ***But do the troops?***

Several defense leaders in separate hearings said the servicemembers they've talked to are willing to accept pay and benefit changes as long as they can get the training and equipment needed to do their jobs.

This feedback flies in the face of recent survey data.

So who are these defense leaders talking to and what does the survey say? It appears they are not talking to servicemembers and their families who are taking online surveys.

MOAA conducted a compensation survey in March. Of the 4,700 currently serving members who responded, more than 65 percent indicated they were least satisfied with their basic pay. **MOAA agrees.**

**The bottom line:** What does the survey say? MOAA believes it's pretty clear servicemembers and their families do not support these proposals. Fortunately, the House Armed Services Committee feels the same way.

#### **MOAA Legislative Update, 23 May 2014:**

##### Congress Split on TRICARE, Pay, Housing

The House passed its version of the FY 2015 defense authorization bill (H.R. 4435) on May 22 after considering more than 300 amendments.

The bill rejects administration proposals to cap military pay, consolidate TRICARE options, increase healthcare fees, raise out-of-pocket housing costs for currently serving families, and significantly reduce savings at the commissary.

This represents a major victory in MOAA's effort to resist the administration's attempt to shift significant personnel costs onto the backs of servicemembers, retirees, and families.

Key amendments added to House bill during debate include:

- \* Prohibit DoD from using funds to close commissaries
- \* Authorize Space A travel for veterans with a permanent and total VA disability
- \* Ensure access to behavioral health treatment under TRICARE – including Applied Behavioral Analysis – for children with developmental disabilities
- \* Require DoD to establish an electronic tour calculator for reservists to track early retirement credit
- \* Require SecDef to conduct a comprehensive search to determine what ships operated near Vietnam in order to help determine Agent Orange exposure

\* **Make breastfeeding supplies available under TRICARE**

Across the Capitol, the Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC) completed its mark of the Senate version of the defense bill (S. 2289) on the same day.

The SASC mark rejects cuts to commissaries and a consolidation of TRICARE.

However, it includes an active duty pay raise cap below private sector pay growth for the second consecutive year, increases out-of-pocket housing costs for military families, and increases pharmacy co-pays for prescriptions filled outside of military treatment facilities.

Authorize the payment of the Survivor Benefit Plan annuity to a special needs trust. A number of notable provisions in the Senate mark, include:

- \* Provide \$30 million in impact aid for military schools
- \* Grandfather those who join the military before January 1, 2016, from reduced retirement COLAs (future service entrants are still affected by the COLA minus 1 percent cut passed in December 2013)

Committee members expressed their view that including provisions to “slow the growth of personnel costs” are undesirable but necessary based on congressionally-mandated budget levels.

MOAA believes these proposals reverse much of the hard work of Congress has made between 2000 and 2010. Over that time period, Congress eliminated a 13.5 percent military pay gap with the private sector and zeroed-out the 18 percent out-of-pocket housing costs that led to serious retention problems in the late 1990s.

#### Reminder: TFL Pharmacy Changes

If you received a letter notifying you that one or more of your maintenance medications are on the list for the new TRICARE For Life (TFL) mail-order pharmacy pilot – make sure you’re signed up to receive your medications by mail to avoid paying a penalty.

The newly implemented [mail-order pharmacy pilot program](#) requires TFL beneficiaries living in the U.S. to fill select maintenance medications through the TRICARE Pharmacy Home Delivery or a MTF pharmacy.

TRICARE officials noted that many TFL beneficiaries have not yet transitioned over to the mail-order system, and could soon pay the full price of their medication if they continue to use the retail pharmacy system for maintenance medications.

Maintenance medications are those that you take regularly for a chronic condition such as high blood pressure or high cholesterol.

If one of your medications is on the list, the easiest option for you is to transfer your medication from a retail pharmacy to mail-order Home Delivery system.

Find out which maintenance medications are covered under the pilot program and to switch your medications from retail to mail order, you can call Express Scripts Member Choice Center at 1-877-882-3335. You can also make the switch online by logging in to your account. (Once you log in, look for the “Prescriptions” sections on your home page. Then, click “Transfer to Home Delivery.”) You can also have your doctor fax your prescription to 1-877-895-1900.

Remember, if one of your medications is covered by the pilot and you haven’t switched to Home Delivery or a military pharmacy after two refills, you’ll be responsible for 100 percent of the cost if you continue to receive your prescription from a retail pharmacy.

#### **MOAA Legislative Update, 30 May 2014:**

##### Prevent Rx Fee Hike

Both the House and Senate defense bill reject administration proposals to consolidate TRICARE health care options and implement enrollment fees for TRICARE For Life (TFL).

But, the Senate defense bill includes the administration’s proposal to dramatically alter the TRICARE pharmacy benefit (as well as cap military pay raises and increase housing costs for military families).

The proposal would change pharmacy benefits in three key ways:

- 1) *Copay increases* - The charts below illustrate how pharmacy copays would increase over the next decade. Retail and mail-order copays would double or triple while the MTF would remain cost free.
- 2) *Mandatory mail-order refills of maintenance medications for all TRICARE beneficiaries*

The FY 2013 defense authorization act required all TRICARE For Life beneficiaries to refill maintenance medications through either the mail-order pharmacy or an MTF for at least one year. The Senate version of the FY 2015 defense bill would expand this requirement to all TRICARE beneficiaries.

- 3) *Non-formulary medication restrictions*

Drugs not listed on the TRICARE formulary would only be available on a limited basis via the retail pharmacy system. These drugs would still be available through mail-order pharmacy or the MTF.

Send your legislators a [MOAA-suggested message](#) asking them to resist efforts to dramatically increase TRICARE pharmacy copays.

#### **MOAA Legislative Update, 06 June 2014:**

##### Bill Boosts VA Survivor Pay

On May 21, Rep. John Tierney (D-Mass.) introduced H.R. 4741, the Surviving Spouses Benefits Improvement Act.

The bill would increase Dependency Indemnity Compensation (DIC) payments a surviving spouse receives from the VA when a servicemember or veteran dies from a service-connected cause.

Under current law, an eligible surviving spouse receives \$1,233 per month in DIC. The amount is based off 43 percent of the basic compensation for a veteran with a 100 percent disability rating. H.R. 4741 increases that percentage to 55 percent, consistent with other federal employee programs. If enacted, the new DIC rate would be \$1,572 per month.

The bill would exempt the increase in DIC payments from the unfair offset for survivors eligible to receive both a DoD Survivor’s Benefit Plan annuity (SBP) and DIC.

Full elimination of the SBP-DIC offset remains a top legislative goal of MOAA and The Military Coalition.

#### **MOAA Legislative Update, 13 June 2014:**

##### Pay Caps Add Up

By Col. Mike Hayden USAF (Ret)

In this year’s defense budget, administration and Pentagon leaders requested a military pay raise of 1 percent. That’s 0.8 percent below private-sector pay growth, the second-lowest pay raise in 50 years, and a second consecutive year of pay caps.

Like last year, Congress doesn't see eye to eye on the military pay raise. The House rejected the administration's pay cap in favor of a 1.8-percent raise, while the Senate supports the cap of 1 percent.

Uniformed leaders point out this is not a "pay cut," as no servicemembers will see their pay decrease, essentially saying, "Hey, you're still getting a pay raise, so what are you complaining about?"

And, on the surface, a reduction of 0.8 percent doesn't sound like much. But servicemembers and their families know differently and realize this pay proposal fails to keep pay on par with private-sector pay growth.

Servicemembers also realize this is the second year in a row their pay will fail to keep pace with the private sector — a trend that has been repeated several times in the past during tight budget spells.

Throughout the late 1980s and '90s, Congress repeatedly capped military pay below private-sector wage growth. These caps resulted in a 13.5-percent gap between military and civilian pay and a serious retention and recruiting crisis by the early 2000s.

Between 2000 and 2010, Congress worked hard to fix the pay gap. Since then, military pay has kept pace with the private sector until last year, when the president used his executive authority to cap pay.

History has shown that once military pay-cap proposals are accepted, the caps continue until they have wrecked retention and readiness.

History is repeating. The FY 2015 administration budget submission keeps pay caps in place for not just a second straight year but for six straight years.

It took Congress 10 years to make military pay competitive with the civilian sector again. But capping pay for several years definitely will hit your active duty paycheck hard and will have a big impact on your retired pay.

For example, two years of pay caps for an O-3 with 10 years of service will reduce his or her purchasing power by \$1,130 annually.

However, with six years of pay caps, that same O-3 will lose nearly \$30,000 by the time he or she reaches the 20-year point (assuming a 2-percent average rate of civilian wage growth).

And the bleeding doesn't stop there. By age 85, the compounding of six years of pay caps will cost that retiree almost \$120,000 in retired pay.

The grand total loss equals nearly \$150,000 over the servicemember's lifetime.

**The bottom line:** Pay caps add up. Sustaining pay is critical to maintaining a high-quality all-volunteer force.

#### Servicemembers Could See Lower Loan Rates

On June 9, President Obama issued a memo concerning student loan debt for servicemembers and their protections under federal law.

In 2012, the U.S. Consumer Financial Protection Bureau published a report indicating a number of student borrowers were having trouble accessing their rights under the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (SCRA) which caps student loan interest rates at 6 percent.

A Department of Justice investigation led to a settlement against Sallie Mae, the nation's largest student loan service, in May of this year. Sallie Mae was ordered to pay \$96.6M for violating the rights of servicemembers by imposing interest rates above the 6 percent cap.

The settlement requires Sallie Mae to determine which of its borrowers are eligible for the 6 percent rate, and apply the rate cap without the need for borrowers to submit a request.

Servicemembers with private student loans should still contact their student loan service to inquire how to obtain SCRA protections.

If you are a servicemember and have a federal student loan that you took out before you entered service, you are no longer required to ask your loan service or send in your orders for an interest rate reduction. Your interest rate reduction will be applied automatically.

#### **MOAA Legislative Update, 20 June 2014:**

##### Defense Leaders Make Budget Push

Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Martin Dempsey made their final push in support of administration's FY 2015 budget proposal at a Senate Appropriations Defense Subcommittee hearing on June 18.

Members of the subcommittee used the majority of the hearing to gather information about the reemerging conflict in Iraq, but the DoD witnesses emphasized that the current budget environment required personnel accounts to be trimmed to preserve military readiness.

They restated their support of administration proposals to cap military pay, hike TRICARE pharmacy fees, consolidate TRICARE options, increase out-of-pocket housing costs, and cut the commissary subsidy.

Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.) echoed his support for making cuts to military personnel programs, insisting that personnel costs consume 50 percent of the defense budget and continue to grow at an unsustainable rate. However, MOAA's own analysis shows that military personnel and health care costs comprise the same share of the defense budget (a little less than one-third) that they have for the last 30 years.

In May, the House rejected all of the administration's proposals to shift costs onto the backs of servicemembers and retirees in its version of the FY 2015 defense authorization bill. However, the Senate Armed Services Committee adopted a second-year pay cap for servicemembers along with increases in pharmacy fees and increased out-of-pocket housing costs.

MOAA believes DoD leadership and the administration are presenting a false choice between providing adequate compensation for servicemembers and providing the training and equipment needed to accomplish their mission safely.

##### Reject Short-Sighted, Budget-Driven Proposals

All Americans will need to share the sacrifice required to tackle our national debt, but the all-volunteer force shouldn't be asked to shoulder a disproportionate share of the burden after all its already sacrificed. Send your senators a MOAA-suggested message asking them to reject these short-sighted budget-driven proposals.

##### Letter from the President

Throughout the year, we publish numerous materials meant to educate both our members and our lawmakers on the importance of military rights and how the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) is protecting them. But the one publication that stands out to me is MOAA's Annual Letter.

This personal publication affords MOAA the rare opportunity to not only reach out to our members nationwide but to also



reflect and anticipate — to look back on our victories in Washington and to look ahead at those that are to come.

Below, you'll find a summary of what we've achieved together in the past year, from how many messages we've sent to Congress to how many military children we've put through college. You'll also learn how you can get involved with MOAA and gain the most from your relationship with us. Whether it means joining a local chapter, participating as a board member, or sharing a message on our Facebook page, it's all about connecting.

As you read through this annual letter, my greatest hope is for you to take pride in the organization that takes so much pride in you. I am honored to call myself your president.

Sincerely,

Vice Adm. Norbert R. Ryan Jr., USN (Ret) President

### COLA Rises Again

#### May COLA Announced

The Consumer Price Index increased once again in May, rising to 234.216. It now stands 1.7 percent above the FY2014 COLA baseline of 230.327.

### Defense Leaders Make Budget Push

Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Martin Dempsey made their final push in support of administration's FY 2015 budget proposal at a Senate Appropriations Defense Subcommittee hearing on June 18.

Members of the subcommittee used the majority of the hearing to gather information about the reemerging conflict in Iraq, but the DoD witnesses emphasized that the current budget environment required personnel accounts to be trimmed to preserve military readiness.

They restated their support of administration proposals to cap military pay, hike TRICARE pharmacy fees, consolidate TRICARE options, increase out-of-pocket housing costs, and cut the commissary subsidy.

Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.) echoed his support for making cuts to military personnel programs, insisting that personnel costs consume 50 percent of the defense budget and continue to grow at an unsustainable rate. However, MOAA's own analysis shows that military personnel and health care costs comprise the same share of the defense budget (a little less than one-third) that they have for the last 30 years.

In May, the House rejected all of the administration's proposals to shift costs onto the backs of servicemembers and retirees in its version of the FY 2015 defense authorization bill. However, the Senate Armed Services Committee adopted a second-year pay cap for servicemembers along with increases in pharmacy fees and increased out-of-pocket housing costs.

MOAA believes DoD leadership and the administration are presenting a false choice between providing adequate compensation for servicemembers and providing the training and equipment needed to accomplish their mission safely.

### Reject Short-Sighted, Budget-Driven Proposals

All Americans will need to share the sacrifice required to tackle our national debt, but the all-volunteer force shouldn't be asked to shoulder a disproportionate share of the burden after all its already sacrificed. Send your senators a MOAA-suggested message asking them to reject these short-sighted budget-driven proposals.

### VA Looks to Outside for Health Care Help

The House Committee on Veterans Affairs held a hearing on June 18 to discuss how the VA can better provide health care to veterans outside of the VA's hospitals and clinics.

The VA already has a civilian health care network designed to help provide veterans with timely access to care at a facility closer to home.

Representatives from the VA's Patient-Centered Community (purchased) Care contractors – TriWest and Health Net – testified that the program is growing in certain regions, but isn't as robust or well utilized as DoD's TRICARE network.

Randy Williamson, director of the GAO's health care program, noted that the VA's purchased care system suffers from many of the same flaws as the rest of VA health care system. Wait times are not tracked, claims processing errors are too common, patient data is not seamlessly communicated back to the VA, and appointment scheduling problems are widespread. "Once a veteran is authorized to use [purchased] care, the VA does not track how long the veteran waits to see the provider. So little is known about wait times," Williamson said.

Building an adequate health care network to help ease demand at VA facilities is a common-sense approach. But the entire VA health care system is in need of a thorough review. That's why MOAA asked the president to establish an independent, high-level commission to examine the VA health care system for the 21st century to ensure it provides veterans with timely access to quality care.

### Letter from the President

Throughout the year, we publish numerous materials meant to educate both our members and our lawmakers on the importance of military rights and how the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) is protecting them. But the one publication that stands out to me is MOAA's Annual Letter.

This personal publication affords MOAA the rare opportunity to not only reach out to our members nationwide but to also reflect and anticipate — to look back on our victories in Washington and to look ahead at those that are to come.

Below, you'll find a summary of what we've achieved together in the past year, from how many messages we've sent to Congress to how many military children we've put through college. You'll also learn how you can get involved with MOAA and gain the most from your relationship with us. Whether it means joining a local chapter, participating as a board member, or sharing a message on our Facebook page, it's all about connecting.

As you read through this annual letter, my greatest hope is for you to take pride in the organization that takes so much pride in you. I am honored to call myself your president.

Sincerely,

Vice Adm. Norbert R. Ryan Jr., USN (Ret) President

### COLA Rises Again

#### May COLA Announced

The Consumer Price Index increased once again in May, rising to 234.216. It now stands 1.7 percent above the FY2014 COLA baseline of 230.327.

## MOAA Legislative Update, 20 June 2014:

### Rare Conference on Veterans' Bill

Chairmen Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) and Jeff Miller (R-Fla.), respective chairs of the Senate and House Veterans Affairs Committees gaveled the opening of a rare conference June 24 to discuss pending legislation that seeks to speed up access to VA care for thousands of veterans on waiting lists at VA medical facilities across the country.

Though cordial, the conferees offered competing views on how best to resolve the access problem.

Republicans, led by Senator John McCain (R-Ariz.), House Veterans Affairs (HVAC) Chairman Miller, Senate Veterans Affairs (SVAC) Ranking Member Richard Burr (R-N.C.) and others, would give veterans a 'gold choice' card that would allow them to get care from outside the VA system if they met certain criteria to trigger the election.

Democrats, led by Sen. Sanders and HVAC Ranking Member Mike Michaud (D-Maine), voiced preferences for expanding VA's capacity through various measures addressed in the legislation including more effective use of existing purchased care contracts.

In his opening remarks, Sen. Burr denounced the Congressional Budget Office's (CBO) high cost estimate to field a 'choice,' card. Burr said the CBO's \$35 to \$40 billion price tag was ludicrous. The numbers are "grotesquely out of line" and, in his view, were actually higher than the cost of providing care to currently enrolled veterans. He said it made no sense to expect that almost 8 million veterans would drop other coverage such as TRICARE, Federal Employee Health Benefits insurance, Medicare or private insurance to get a VA choice card for the two-year pilot program set out in the Senate bill.

Democrats fretted that the focus should be on fixing the VA, not diverting resources by expanding outside referrals beyond current arrangements (The VA will spend about \$5 billion this year for contracted – purchased – care from outside providers). Former SVAC Chairman Sen. Jay Rockefeller (D-W.V.) said the goal should be to "improve the VA, not tear it down."

A number of conferees agreed that the focus should be on how to quickly resolve the backlog of wait-listed patients, change the culture within the VA and establish greater accountability at all levels.

House panel member Rep. Phil Roe (R-Tenn.), a physician and former Army Reserve medical officer said throwing more money at the VA won't solve the problem.

Two members endorsed seizing the moment to take a longer view on the future of VA health care. Rep. Tim Walz (D-Minn.), a former Army National Guard sergeant major and Iraq war veteran asked rhetorically why there isn't an over-arching strategy on veterans. Rep. Dan Benishek (D-Mich.), who served veterans for 20 years as a physician at a VA facility, said the best health care minds should be brought in to compare and contrast VA performance with outside health care practices.

Along these lines, MOAA continues to endorse the establishment of a high-level, independent commission to chart the future of VA health care in the 21st century.

Sen. McCain warned that the "last shoe" had not dropped on the VA scandal. He emphasized that the situation in the VA was an "emergency" and urged his fellow conferees to lay out the parameters of what needs to be done and move forward.

The conferees are expected to hammer out a compromise after returning from the July 4 recess.

### Army Opens Jobs to Women

On June 17, Secretary of the Army John McHugh issued a memorandum opening more than 33,000 duty positions to women.

Of the more than 400 total military occupational specialties (MOS), only 14 are closed to women.

### Expanding VA Health Care Access

The VA hosted MOAA and other military and veterans service organizations at a June 26 briefing to get the word out about the VA's new purchased care (PC-3) health care system.

The contracts launched in April, allow veterans who are not able to be seen within a VA facility due to long wait times, travel distance, or lack of available specialty to be referred to a network community health care provider.

The contracts are administered by TriWest (covering West and South regions) and Health Net (Midwest and North). Both firms have experience as TRICARE contractors.

The contracts do not provide primary care currently, a key concern of veterans organizations given the access challenges exposed by the Phoenix VA hospital scandal.

Another concern is the length of time it takes for a veteran receiving a VA referral to be seen by a civilian provider. The VA does not appear to track that metric at this time.

A three-year VA pilot program to assist veterans in rural areas, known as Project ARCH (Access Received Closer to Home), is slated to shut down in September. Under this program, regional VA medical centers in five locations contract directly with local hospital provider networks to provide primary, specialty, and hospital care.

The VA does not plan to extend the ARCH program, as they anticipate the new PC3 contracts will replace these local initiatives. A number of lawmakers are pressing to extend the Project because of its perceived success in getting veterans into care closer to home with savings from reduced travel costs.

Using civilian providers to ensure access to VA sponsored care should be improved. At a recent meeting with VA Acting Secretary Sloan Gibson, MOAA suggested he consider extending the PC-3 contracts to primary care where needed to address the backlog of wait-listed veterans.

*You only live once.  
But if you work it right, once is enough.  
Joe E. Lewis, comedian*



# JAYHAWK CHAPTER MOAA



A membership meeting will be held **Tuesday, 15 July 2014**, at the Lawrence Country Club.

Dinner cost is **\$24.00/meal**.

**The Program:** Our guest speaker will be Derek Kwan, Executive Director of the Lied Center of Kansas

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

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

Send your reservation and check payable to Jayhawk Chapter MOAA to arrive no later than **Wednesday, 09 July 2014**, 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 **\$24.00 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](http://www.moaa.org)

KANSAS COUNCIL WEBSITE: [www.kansasmooa.org](http://www.kansasmooa.org)

JAYHAWK CHAPTER WEBSITE: [www.jayhawkmoaa.org](http://www.jayhawkmoaa.org)

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

### **2014 Meeting Schedule:**

Tuesday	15 July 2014
Tuesday	16 September 2014
Tuesday	18 November 2014



*One Association, One Voice. Yours.*

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

***IN GOD WE TRUST***