



Jayhawk Chapter MOAA Newsletter

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November Program:

Our speaker for the November meeting will be Mr. Tom Boos, VA Chief of Strategic Management & Planning. He will cover a couple of topics related to the VA and VA benefits and services and then open up the discussion for questions and comments from the floor.

★★★★★ CHAPTER
awarded for

2002 / 2003 / 2005 / 2008 / 2009
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President's Comments . .

With the Fall season upon us, it is time to re-energize our efforts in getting the MOAA priorities communicated to our elected officials at the National, State and local levels. Responding to the MOAA "Call for Action" issues by communicating them directly to the appropriate legislators is a very effective, efficient and timely way to accomplish this.



With the end of 2016 right around the corner there are some opportunities becoming available for you to increase your participation in the Jayhawk Chapter as follows:

Jayhawk Chapter Officers and Board Members need to be elected and installed for 2017. We need to elect a 1st Vice President, 2nd Vice President, and a couple of Elected Board Members. If you are interested in this opportunity, please contact any of the current Officers and/or Board Members.

Please let me know of any and all of your volunteer activities within the community. Please do not be shy or bashful in providing me information on what organizations and activities you participate in. This can include anything you do individually or collectively such as volunteer at LMH, volunteer at Watkins Museum, act in theater performances, coach a youth team, participate in local government, serve in a position in your church, mentor and/or give presentations to schools or groups (i.e., Veterans in Classrooms), help place and recover flags for Memorial Day observation, or any other things you may be involved with. I will use this information in preparing the 2016 Level Of Excellence Award nomination. I have to submit this nomination by the end of February, 2017, so respectfully request you have this information sent to me by the middle of January. Thanks in advance for doing this.

Col John Halladay, USA (Ret) and his wife, Shirley, represented the Jayhawk Chapter at the MOAA National Meeting in Arlington, VA on October 24-25. Along with attending the Annual Business Meeting, they attended the Annual Recognition Dinner where COL Halladay was presented the 2015 Four Star Level Of Excellence Award for the Jayhawk Chapter. This Award will be attached to our Chapter Flag at the November Dinner and Business Meeting on November 15. I hope to see all of you there.

Thank you, and Never Stop Serving.

Mike

Volume XXI, Issue 6

1 November 2016

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*** Reservations should be sent
to Jim Cooper by
9 November 2016**



JAYHAWK CHAPTER NEWS



CONDOLENCES

Roy Creek (Col. Ret. US Army)

Roy Creek died Monday afternoon, 10 October, at Lawrence Memorial Hospital, surrounded by family. Creek was one of the 13,000 paratroopers who jumped in Normandy in the early morning hours of D-Day in 1944, a company commander in the 507th Parachute Infantry Regiment. Today a bridge at Chef-du-Pont in Normandy, where he led a successful assault on the German troops, bears his name. The actions of Creek and his men have been recounted in many books, most notably by Stephen Ambrose. Creek was awarded many medals during his military career, including the [Bronze Star](#) and the French Croix De Guerre for his actions in Normandy and a [Purple Heart](#) for the wound he sustained in the Battle of the Bulge. After the war, Creek remained in the army. In a career that lasted until 1967, he served tours of duty in Germany, Vietnam, at the Pentagon, and at bases in Kansas, Texas, Alabama, and Georgia. After his military retirement, he moved to Lake Quivira, Kansas, and worked for two years for the defense contractor Booz Allen

and then for 15 years as a hospital administrator at KU Medical Center before his final retirement.

While serving at Fort Huachuca, Arizona, he met and married Florine Meenan of nearby Bisbee, on August 21, 1942. Creek and his wife lived at Lake Quivira for 36 years where he was able to pursue his passions for golf and fishing. He was an avid sports fan, especially the Royals and KU Jayhawks. He and his wife moved to Lawrence in 2003. Roy Creek is survived by his wife of 74 years, Florine Creek of Lawrence; by his sons, Dennis (Linda) of Berkeley, California; Pat (Carol) of Cleveland, Ohio; and Condy (Connie) of Lake Quivira, Kansas; by his daughter, Cindy Maude of Lawrence; and by eleven grandchildren and 16 great-grandchildren.

Mass of Christian Burial was held at Corpus Christi Catholic Church at 9:00 am 17 October. Inurnment was at Ft. Leavenworth National Cemetery.

James R. (Jim) Henry, (CAPT USN Ret)

A memorial service for James R. Henry, ("Jim"), 82, Lawrence was held 21 October at First United Methodist Church. He passed away 11 October at Neuvant House of Lawrence. Inurnment followed with military honors in Pioneer Cemetery on the University of Kansas campus.

Jim has been a resident of Lawrence since 1967, when he moved here to attend the University of Kansas after serving on active and reserve duty for a number of years as a Naval Aviator and as an Air Intelligence Officer.

Captain Henry first enlisted in the U.S. Navy on 4 June 4 1952, at Minneapolis, Minnesota. He completed Recruit Training at the Naval Training Center, Great Lakes, Illinois, followed by completion of Airman Preparatory School at Norman, Oklahoma, and Naval Aviation Electronics School at Memphis, Tennessee. He then was assigned to the Naval Air Test Center, Patuxent River, Maryland, as an Aviation Electronics Technician.

In August 1954, Captain Henry began the course of instruction in the Naval School of Preflight, Pensacola, Florida. As a Naval Aviation Cadet he completed all phases of flight training which included aircraft carrier landing qualification, and he was commissioned an Ensign and designated a Naval Aviator in April 1956, at Hutchison, Kansas. He then served in Utility Squadron Five at Atsugi, Japan; Jet Transitional Training Unit, Olathe, Kansas, All Weather Fighter Squadron Three and Heavy Attack Squadron 16, both at San Diego, California; and in Heavy Attack Training Unit Pacific at Whidbey Island, Washington. Shortly after, he was assigned to the new Naval Auxiliary Air Station, Meridian, Mississippi, where he served as Personnel Officer. Subsequently, he completed the Armed Forces Air Intelligence Training Center course of instruction at Denver, Colorado, and was assigned as the Air Wing

Intelligence Officer for Attack Carrier Air Wing 19, operating in the Western Pacific and Tonkin Gulf in the South China Sea, off Vietnam, aboard the U.S.S. Bon Homme Richard. He subsequently served in the same capacity aboard the U.S.S. Ticonderoga, and later, as Assistant Officer in Charge of the Fleet Air Intelligence Support Center at Lemoore, California.

Upon leaving active duty in 1967, Jim enrolled at the University of Kansas where he completed the Bachelor of Science in Education degree, the Master of Science in Education degree, and the Doctor of Higher Education degree, which was awarded in 1976. During that time, he was also employed by the University as Assistant Registrar for the Office of Admissions and Records and later, as Director of the Office of Veterans Services.

From 1967 to 1985, Captain Henry served as an Intelligence Officer in Naval Intelligence units in Olathe, Kansas; Memphis, Tennessee; St. Louis, Missouri; and in a Cruiser/Destroyer unit in Lincoln, Nebraska. He was recalled to active duty in 1973 to lead a debriefing team for Operation Homecoming, the return of Vietnam POW's. He served as Commanding Officer of a Defense Documents unit and a Naval Investigative Service unit, both in Kansas City, Missouri, and as Commanding Officer of an Intelligence Volunteers Training unit in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Following that, he served as the Reserve Intelligence Area Coordinator, Area 10, in Minneapolis, Minnesota, where he directed the Naval Reserve Intelligence Program for the Midwest United States. Captain Henry retired from the U.S. Navy on 1 July 1985, after serving the Navy and United States for more than 33 years.

In 1979, Jim joined the University of Kansas Placement Center where he directed career placement programs for the Liberal Arts and Sciences and the Fine Arts colleges. While at

**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.**

the Placement Center, he assisted hundreds of students with their career and employment ambitions. He was selected by the 1992 Senior Class to receive the Citation for Leadership and Achievement in Student Services (CLASS) Award. He was also appointed to the Graduate Faculty as an Adjunct Assistant Professor in the Counseling Psychology department.

Jim retired from the University of Kansas in 1997 and, in 1999, was elected to a four-year term on the Lawrence City Commission. He served as Mayor of Lawrence from 2000 to 2001, and retired from the City Commission on 8 April 2003. While Mayor, Jim was instrumental in bringing to the City in 2000, the Lawrence Transit bus system. Buses continue to serve the City today.

Throughout his many years in Lawrence, Jim made service to the community a top priority. He was a member of the Jaycees and the Luncheon Optimists, worked on United Way campaigns and was a past president of Warm Hearts of Douglas County. He also served on the Board of Directors of Health Care Access, was President of Lawrence [Rotary Club](#) where he was honored with the Paul Harris Fellowship Award, Rotary's

highest honor. He was also involved in Habitat for Humanity. Jim was very committed to service to First United Methodist Church of Lawrence, where he held many leadership positions and chaired a number of committees and fundraising efforts. He co-chaired ticket sales for Lawrence Memorial Hospital "Hearts of Gold" events. In addition, Jim founded the Santa Fe Trail Leavenworth chapter of The Military Officers of America Association (MOAA). He served as the president of that chapter and of the Jayhawk Lawrence chapter. Jim was president of the Missouri-Kansas Association of Naval Aviation and he served for two years as President of the Kansas Council of Chapters, MOAA (six chapters).

Jim and his wife, Kay, were married in Yokohama, Japan on 5 October 1957 and celebrated 59 years of marriage this October. Kay survives as do their two daughters, Barb Henry and Jennifer McWilliams. Also surviving are Jennifer's husband, Kevin, and their sons Brogan and Ian. Jim's two surviving sisters, Sally Gibb and Jane Mardison, reside in California.

PERSONAL NEWS

Dean Bevan: October was a busy month, with my plays being performed in three cities: "Grim Reaper" at Blackshaw Theatre in London, UK; "Rent-A-Monster" at East High Drama in Anchorage AK; and "Welcome to Happy Hill" broadcast by OnAir Players from Pittsburgh PA.

Herschel & Jacque Stroud: We were in the Yucatán peninsula, speaking Spanish, and visiting pyramids. We gave up the beach because the wrinkles in our skin cannot be pressed out. We returned on the 21st. Greetings and best wishes to all our Jayhawk Chapter friends.

John Halladay: Shirley and I took a short run Saturday, 22 Oct, to Arlington, VA for the MOAA National Council and Chapter Level of Excellence banner presentation on Monday 24 Oct (4-Star Chapter Award) and returned 27 Oct afternoon.



Army News *LTC Tracey Olson, USA*

Greetings Jayhawk Chapter!

This past quarter, we conducted our fall FTX. Upon arrival at the FTX site, the battalion conducted round-robin training with three stations: land navigation, patrol base operations, and radio familiarization/etiquette. We ended the night with SHARP/EO training, focusing on "intent vs. impact" since this may have been our cadets' first exposure to sleeping in the same vicinity with members of the other sex. We began the following morning with rigorous, team building PT and continued the day with STX lanes and a paint ball station. Overall, we received very positive feedback from our new cadets that "this is the type of training we want". Cadets, already in the program, reported that the FTX was better than last year's training.

We also had General David Perkins, Commanding General of TRADOC as a guest speaker to the Cadet Battalion. I was impressed with the questions the cadets

asked GEN Perkins during his visit – one cadet asked for clarification on "prudent risk" and when in GEN Perkins' career did he exercise prudent risk.

Our upcoming events – JBAA Induction, sporting events and community/veteran events – continue to increase our visibility on campus and strengthen our partnerships/relationships with other entities within KU as well as the community. I will take this a step further and encourage our cadets to volunteer service in the community.

Our incoming SMSI, 1SG Moore, will be signing in on 10 November. We look forward to answering his questions and beginning the process to integrate him to the Jayhawk team.

LTC Tracey Olson



Navy News CAPT Dave Meron, USN

Greetings from the Jayhawk Navy!

September and October have been exciting months for the midshipmen in the Jayhawk Battalion. Besides conducting quality physical training and professional development, we said goodbye to two great officers, Commander Higginbotham, USN and Captain Collins, USMC. They both retired with over twenty years of active service in the United States Navy and Marine Corps respectively.

Several midshipmen competed in the annual Dr. Bob 5K while another completed her first marathon, where she finished first in her class! Besides typical PT training sessions, we lead a joint PT session with the Air Force ROTC detachment including a cadence run to Lawrence High School and station work outs. It was a great opportunity for the two units interact. The entire battalion left the interaction with the Air



A Midshipman calls cadence during joint PT

Force ROTC with nothing but respect for their counterparts.

In addition to gaining experience operating with the Air Force, we also conducted our first “break out” lab to increase professional knowledge. During this lab, midshipmen implemented skills learned from classrooms into practical applications. Navy Options received an introduction to our ship simulation software taught by our Surface Warfare and Submarine Lieutenants. The software is a great tool for our midshipmen to learn the basics of navigation, ship handling and Rules of the Road. In

addition, Officer Candidate School graduates taught the Marine Options the basics of land navigation.

In October, the battalion conducted a service dress blues inspection and then followed up with a celebration of the 241st Navy Birthday by cutting cake. The battalion looked excellent and are proud to represent the Navy and Marine Corps.

The Annual Alumni and Homecoming Tailgate was held on the 22nd of October with 60 family and alumni in attendance. The midshipmen really enjoyed talking to everyone and listening to sea stories from the alumni.



Service Dress Blues Inspection

November will continue to be a busy month for the battalion. We invite you to stop by the war memorials on campus to support our midshipmen who will be standing watch on during Veterans Day weekend.

Another event that you can interact with the midshipmen is the Salute to Service football game on the 19th of November. Thank you for your continued support of the Jayhawk Battalion!

Rock Chalk and Go Navy!

CAPT David J. Meron



Air Force News LtCol Bill Pastewait, USAF

Hello from Detachment 280, the Flying Jayhawks!

It’s been a busy and great start to the Fall Semester. I’d like to start off by recognizing our detachment staff. First, Mrs. Jaime Snyder was selected as the Northwest Region NCO of the Quarter for 3rd Quarter, 2016. This is a great accomplishment as Mrs. Snyder put in significant work that enabled our Air Force Marathon trip and cadet orientation. Second, Detachment 280 was recognized as

the Northwest Region Team of the Quarter for 3rd Quarter, 2016. Both the detachment and Mrs. Snyder will compete at the Air Force ROTC HQ level.

Finally, we were honored to be recognized as the Northwest Region “Right of Line” nominee in the small detachment category for Academic Year 2015-2016. This is the highest award a detachment can receive in Air Force

ROTC so this is great news for our program and rewards the hard work of our staff and cadets. We will compete at the HQ level for national honors in November.

Detachment update:

Sixteen cadets and cadre participated in the Air Force Marathon at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Ohio. 13 cadets and cadre completed the full marathon and 3 completed the half-marathon with 14 runners completing those events for the first time. All cadets completed the race within the 7 hour time limit. Overall, a great event for our program. In addition to the race, the cadets also got to spend some time at the Air Force Museum. We were extremely proud of the cadets for completing the race which many said was the hardest thing they've ever done. We are planning to run the race next year as well.

In coordination with the KU Veterans Alumni Network, KU Chapter of the Student Veterans of America and all three ROTC programs, the University of Kansas held a 9/11 Remembrance Ceremony. The event included the Lawrence Police Chief as the guest speaker, bells being played in the bell tower, bagpipes played by a KU student, a Joint ROTC Honor Guard and the lighting of candles to remember those lost. The news article about the event can be found here:

http://www.kansan.com/news/years-later-campus-remembers/article_cf03ae6a-7895-11e6-bef0-abd523c7f059.html

The cadets conducted a field leadership exercise on the KU West Campus. This replicated an Air Expeditionary Force-type deployment and focused on the cultural challenges that Air Force officers face when working in foreign country. The cadets practiced key leader engagements, advising, urban operations and force protection objectives. Our thanks to the KU Army ROTC program for supporting us with equipment which made the training more realistic.

The cadets and cadre has a great time at the Joint Military Ball on 23 October. With around 400 attendees, the cadets had an opportunity to socialize with other cadets and midshipmen as well as officers and spouses.

It also provided an environment in which the cadets could learn about the formalities and military traditions of a military ball. The KU Navy Detachment planned and implemented a successful event. CAPT (Ret) John "Irish" Keilty was the guest speaker and gave an inspiring speech to the attendees.

Coming Up:

We will host a Career Day on Thursday, 27 October. This provides an opportunity for cadets to interact with officers from nearby bases and discuss potential jobs as well as life as an Air Force officer.

The Joint Service Ball will be held on Friday, 4 November at the Doubletree Hotel in Lawrence. This is a great event that focuses on the joint relationship between the services and enables the programs to recognize their graduating seniors.

Veterans Day activities are on the horizon. The cadets will continue supporting the 24-hour vigil of military monuments on campus from 12 – 13 November. The Veterans Day Run will begin at KU's Memorial Stadium on 13 November at 0900. All proceeds from the event support the KU Wounded Warrior Scholarship Fund and the KU Student Veterans Association. Cadets will be in attendance at the Salute to Service Football Game on Saturday, 12 November.

Senior cadets are anxiously awaiting their career field selections and expect to receive that announcement in November.

We look forward to a strong finish to the Fall Semester and upcoming scholarship boards for our sophomore cadets.

Rock, Chalk!

Very Respectfully,

LtCol Bill Pastewait

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, 29 August 2016:

Commissary Savings - Recalculating

Over the last year, MOAA has been vigilantly monitoring ongoing DoD and congressional efforts to make the commissary system more efficient and reduce its dependence on taxpayer subsidies.

Congress and the Pentagon have agreed maintaining patron savings at current levels is the first priority. Any efforts to chase efficiency must not diminish the savings. As such, that benchmark of current savings must be established to measure the impact of future changes.

Current savings relative to commercial grocery stores - long reported by commissary officials as 30 percent - are calculated as a worldwide average.

MOAA Legislative Update, 01 September 2016:

Social Security Fast Facts

The Social Security Administration has just released a new publication, "Fast Facts & Figures About Social Security, 2016." Here are a few highlights:

- * Number of people receiving Social Security benefits: 60 million
- * Percentage of Social Security recipients who get at least half their income from Social Security: 61 percent
- * Percentage of Social Security disability recipients younger than age 65: 28 percent
- * Percentage of Social Security recipients who are women: 55 percent
- * Maximum current Social Security Benefit for a worker retiring at full retirement age in 2016: \$2,639 per month

- * Current size of the Social Security trust fund: \$2.83 trillion
- * Percentage of Social Security revenues that come from taxation of Social Security benefits as income: 3.4 percent
- * Ratio of current workers to current Social Security recipients: 2.4 workers for every recipient

In the next Congress (2017-18), entitlement (including Social Security) reform almost certainly will be a hot item, and we expect a range of old and some new ideas will be put on the table by various politicians, interest groups, and appointed panels.

To date, almost all of the proposed changes have gone nowhere, but the issue isn't likely to go away based on projections the trust fund will be exhausted in 20 years or so.

MOAA Legislative Update, 09 September 2016:

President Responds To VA Health Care Report

President Obama recently sent Congress his views on the report recommendations from the Commission on Care, a federally-directed panel charged with reviewing organization and delivery of health care organization in the VA for the 21st century.

The president supports 15 of the commission's 18 recommendations.

Many of the recommendations supported are already being implemented or have been completed as part of the VA Secretary's ongoing MyVA transformation efforts. Those include enhancing clinical operations, establishing consistent policy for appealing clinical decisions, eliminating health care disparities in underserved and minority veteran populations, modernizing technology systems, and establishing new leadership development and performance management system and processes.

The president also endorsed the Commission proposal to establish a five-year appointment for the Under Secretary of Health to provide greater continuity in health care operations and prevent disruption in leadership that often comes with political transitions.

One recommendation the administration didn't support proposed a governing board of directors to provide overall VA health system governance to set long-term strategy and direct and oversee the transformation process.

The main concern is such a change in the governance structure would likely undermine the authority of the VA Secretary and the Under Secretary for Health and undermine Congress' role by adding an additional level of bureaucracy, further slowing progress and hindering transformation.

The president agreed with the proposal to integrate VA and private care into a robust network of care, but urged Congress to enact VA's plan to consolidate community care submitted to Congress last year.

MOAA supports most of the commission's findings, and we are pleased to see the backing of the White House.

The president directed VA Secretary Bob McDonald to implement supported recommendations not yet achieved and to submit to Congress relevant legislation as needed.

MOAA Legislative Update, 16 September 2016:

TriCare, Pay, Housing, Face Speed Bumps

The House and Senate Armed Services committees are well into serious negotiations to resolve a wide array of differences between their respective versions of the FY17 Defense Authorization Bill.

Some of the key sticking points include:

Whether DoD should get extra funding above the caps in the last budget deal. Leaders of both Armed Services committees believe the answer is "yes." The president and most Democrats in Congress believe any relief from the cap on defense spending should be matched by equal relief from the cap on non-defense spending.

Where any extra funds should come from. Both chambers have proposed using the Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) fund, either by plugging it up or by diverting some of the existing OCO funds to the base defense budget. The latter route would require the next

president to request supplemental war funding for FY17. Some object to this as underfunding war needs, but Congress did the same thing between the Bush and Obama administrations.

What the extra money should pay for. The Senate defense bill caps the military pay raise at 1.6 percent and cuts force levels for all services, as proposed in the Pentagon's budget. The House bill would fund a full 2.1 percent raise and plus up force levels. Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman John McCain (R-Ariz.) has supported adding funds for both increases, so that gives us hope on those scores, subject to resolution of the two issues mentioned above.

TRICARE fee hikes. The Senate bill would phase in substantial increases for retirees under 65 years old and roughly double pharmacy copayments over nine years. The House bill would impose increases for future entrants but would mostly grandfather current fee levels for currently serving and retired beneficiaries.

Housing allowances. The Senate bill would impose dramatic allowance cuts for servicemembers who share housing with other servicemembers, whether they are married or roommates. The House bill makes no such changes.

Military health system organization. Both bills would impose new requirements to improve health care access, quality, and continuity. Both also would put all service hospitals and clinics under the purview of the Defense Health Agency. Service leaders have been spending a lot of time on Capitol Hill arguing for modifications on the latter issue.

TriCare Improves Mental Health Services

Starting Oct. 1, TRICARE is implementing new policies in an effort to get better and more timely mental health services to beneficiaries who need them.

To eliminate potential barriers to getting much-needed care, TRICARE is removing duration limits for certain mental health services, such as inpatient treatment and residential treatment stays.

Under the current policy, the inpatient psychiatric hospitalization benefit is limited to 30 days per year for adults and 45 days for children and adolescents. For any extension, beneficiaries have to request a waiver.

Congress Must Act So Veterans Don't Suffer

As Congress inches closer to leaving town to campaign for re-election, many veteran bills remain on the table and are at risk of not passing before the new fiscal year begins.

On Sept. 14, MOAA Director of Veterans Health Issues Cdr. René Campos, USN (Ret), testified before the Senate Veteran Affairs Committee (SVAC) to provide MOAA's views on the recent Commission on Care's recommendations concerning VA health care.

Also testifying were VA Secretary Bob McDonald, Under Secretary for Health Dr. David Shulkin, the Commission on Care chair and commissioner, and several veteran service organizations (VSO).

MOAA supports most of the commission's findings and is pleased many of the recommendations echo changes the secretary and VSOs have been advocating for since the implementation of the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 (Choice Act).

But Congress has yet to act on a number of pending initiatives, including S. 2921, the Veterans First Act, which was approved by the SVAC but hasn't been brought before the full Senate.

"We want to see the exhaustive work of the commission as well as critical legislation proposed by the Congress and the administration enacted this year," Campos told legislators. All witnesses agreed action is needed to provide the VA authority and funding to continue its work. There also was agreement on continuing the Choice Program, fixing the broken veterans claims appeals system, and the need for stable VA leadership to change the culture within the VA.

MOAA Legislative Update, 23 September 2016: **How Secure is Social Security?**

*By: Col. Steve Strobbridge, USAF (Ret)
Vice President, Government Relations*

For decades, we've heard ominous statements from various quarters that the Social Security program will go broke at some future point.

The latest report from Social Security actuaries says the Social Security trust fund will be exhausted as of 2034.

Periodically, there have been various proposals to "save" Social Security, ranging from changing the COLA calculation to letting taxpayers shift part of their Social Security taxes into personal stock market accounts.

Most of these proposals have gone nowhere, as legislators have feared a backlash from angry seniors. There's a reason Social Security has been viewed on Capitol Hill as the third rail of politics — "touch it, and you die."

On the other hand, a 2015 survey found 30 percent of Americans under age 50 believe Social Security won't be there for them when they retire.

So what's the reality?

Social Security isn't going to disappear in 2034 or on any other date.

Exhausting the trust fund doesn't mean the end of the program; it means benefits paid couldn't exceed payroll taxes collected after that date. There wouldn't be any fund left to make up the difference.

The fact is, Social Security benefit payouts have exceeded payroll taxes collected since 2010. But the trust fund — currently about \$2.8 trillion— still is growing, largely because the interest (the fund is invested in Treasury bonds) makes up the difference.

But odds are neither of those extremes will happen. Almost certainly, some kind of compromise will tamp down future benefit growth, raise more tax revenue, or (most likely) provide a combination of both.

Options discussed for curbing future benefit growth include:

- * raising the eligibility age to receive benefits by one to three years;
- * implementing some modification of the annual COLA formula;
- * going to a biennial COLA instead of an annual one; and
- * tweaking the benefit formula or wage base history.

Options to raise revenue include:

- * raising the maximum annual earnings subject to payroll taxes (currently \$118,500 a year);
- * increasing the payroll tax percentage;
- * expanding the federal income tax on Social Security benefits; and
- * treating employer-paid health care premiums as taxable income for the worker.

None of these options is popular, and that's why no action has been taken on any of them yet.

But at some point in the coming years, the threat of imposing a 25-percent cut in Social Security benefits (which would outrage seniors) or a 43-percent increase in payroll taxes (which would outrage workers) will force a serious look at various compromise options.

MOAA believes that will serve all concerned parties. Our members have parents, children, and grandchildren and want to protect the interests of all those groups in the fairest possible manner.

Pentagon Leaders to Congress: Do Your Job

In hearings before the Senate Armed Services Committee over the past week, the Service chiefs, the Secretary of Defense, and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff said Congress' eighth straight failure to pass a timely defense appropriations bill is undermining current and future readiness.

The panelists all agreed that short-term continuing resolutions, budget deals capping spending at the previous year's levels and bar any new initiatives, waste money and block essential planning.

"Repealing sequestration [and] returning to stable budgets...are essential" to address long-term challenges said Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. David Goldfein.

Testifying at a later hearing, Defense Secretary Ash Carter said heading into another year with a continuing resolution is a "deplorable state of affairs....It baffles our friends, emboldens our foes, it's managerially and strategically unsound, and it's dispiriting to our troops, to their families, and our workforce."

MOAA agrees with defense and service leaders. Congress needs to remove the threat of sequestration and return to passing defense appropriations bills before the start of the new fiscal year.

MOAA Engaged House Leadership on SBP-DIC

On Sept. 21, MOAA VP for Government Relations Col. Steve Strobbridge, USAF (Ret) and Director of Veterans Health Care Cdr. René Campos, USN (Ret) participated in a meeting of selected military and veterans' organizations with House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.), Rep. Tim Walz (D-Minn.), and several other senior House Democrats.

Rep. Pelosi hosts such meetings periodically to solicit association leaders' views on veterans and other issues.

The topic of this meeting was the [recommendations on the VA Commission on Care](#). Association inputs were generally supportive of the recommendations, including the need for the VA to have a continuing role in coordinating veterans' care.

Community care programs will be important to provide services where VA facilities aren't available or can't provide timely access. But VA must be able to ensure existing capacity is used. Giving all veterans the option to choose civilian providers would necessarily divert more funding from VA services, which would be devastating for VA-unique services involving spinal injuries, PTSD/TBI, and more.

Considerable discussion emphasized the importance of veteran-centric and veteran-sensitive care provided in VA facilities vs. civilian providers who have little experience with military culture and combat environment.

Attendees also urged action to expand eligibility for service-connected presumption of certain Agent Orange-related diseases to sailors who served on Navy vessels off the coast of Vietnam, who also experience disproportional incidences of those diseases.

Strobbridge urged Minority Leader Pelosi to exert leadership effort in the budget process to identify sufficient spending offsets to extend and increase the Special Survivor Indemnity Allowance (SSIA) for eligible survivors whose sponsors died of service-caused conditions. The \$310 monthly SSIA restores about 25 percent of the SBP-DIC "widows tax." Under congressional budget rules, the Armed Services committees can only increase the SSIA if they cut retired pay, SBP, or TRICARE For Life accounts by an equal amount.

Funding fair compensation for these deserving survivors should be the government's responsibility rather than making other beneficiaries pay for it. That's why leadership efforts will be important to provide the Armed Services committees additional budget headroom to do the right thing by these long-suffering survivors.

MOAA Legislative Update, 07 October 2016:

TriCare, Survivor, Other Changes Coming

We'll have to wait at least another six weeks before Congress makes final decisions on the force levels, pay raise, TRICARE fees, and other changes in the FY 2017 Defense Authorization Act.

But we can be pretty sure of at least some of the new changes because they were included in both of the bill versions passed by the House and Senate.

Based on the above, here is what we expect the new defense bill will require.

SBP-DIC Survivors: We fully expect the current Special Survivor Indemnity Allowance (SSIA) - \$310 per month as of this month - won't be allowed to expire next year. It will be extended for at least one year, which gives us another shot at seeking a

further extension and continued increases in the SSIA amount to make more progress toward eliminating the SBP-DIC offset, which is our ultimate goal.

Reimbursement for Drill-Related Travel: Both bills give service secretaries more flexibility to pay higher reimbursements, on a case-by-case basis, to members traveling beyond normal commuting distance.

2017 Reserve TriCare Rates

DoD officials released next year's monthly premiums for TRICARE Reserve Select (TRS) and TRICARE Retired Reserve (TRR).

Type of Coverage	2016 Monthly Rate	2017 Monthly Rate	Annual Change
TRS - Single	\$47.90	\$47.82	- .2%
TRS - Family	\$210.83	\$217.51	+ 6.9%
TRR - Single	\$300.79	\$402.81	+ 6.5%
TRR - Family	\$957.44	\$1,013.36	+ 4.5%

TRS and TRR were established in 2006 and 2009, respectively, after years of advocacy by MOAA and The Military Coalition.

The cost share for TRS beneficiaries is 28 percent of the total cost to the government. Premiums for "gray area" reservists using TRR are significantly more expensive because they require beneficiaries to pay the full cost of premiums. Prior to 2009, "gray area" reservists did not have any military health coverage options.

MOAA's goal is to have a unified health program for Reserve component members, including retired members. To date, funding has been the obstacle.

MOAA also advocates for legislation that would permit civilian employers to pay TRS premiums for their Guard and Reserve employees, and to provide Selected Reservists an option to have the government subsidize continuation of their civilian employer's health coverage for their families during call-ups - just as the government already provides up to 24 months of Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) premium coverage for families of activated Guard/Reserve members who are federal employees.

The new TRS and TRR rates will be effective January 1, 2017.

Elizabeth Dole Launches Hidden Heroes Campaign

Last week, MOAA proudly participated in the Elizabeth Dole Foundation's launching of its Empowering Our Hidden Heroes campaign to help address continuing challenges faced by caregivers of the wounded, ill, and injured.

The Dole Foundation, in partnership with the VA and the Mayo Clinic, sponsored a convening of military and veteran caregivers to raise awareness. The goal is to develop a roadmap to a future state where every caregiver is recognized, appreciated, and empowered.

Tom Hanks joined the campaign, telling the TODAY Show, "[i]t comes down to a chance to serve and I think help out in a very pragmatic and understandable way."

This collaboration is an excellent example of the public/private partnership envisioned and supported by MOAA and others to address the urgent needs of those who provide care to our wounded, ill and injured - most with permanent, life-altering injuries.

Caregivers struggled behind the scenes for decades until recent military conflicts spotlighted their lack of resources and support. MOAA took on this issue in our Warrior Family Symposiums, and Congress passed legislation authorizing a package of VA compensation and assistance for caregivers of post-9/11 veterans. Since 2011, over 30,000 caregivers have gone through the VA program.

But much remains to be done to support the growing population of caregiver spouses, children, parents, siblings, and friends.

The Hidden Heroes launch included many caregivers who cited the many gaps that still exist, including the need to expand the VA program to include caregivers of pre-9/11 wounded, ill, and injured.

MOAA Legislative Update, 14 October 2016:
High or Low COLA – CPI Is Still Your Friend

*By: Col. Steve Strobbridge, USAF (Ret)
Vice President, Government Relations*

Next week, we'll have the final Consumer Price Index (CPI) data point that will determine the 2017 COLA percentage for military retired pay and survivor annuities, Social Security benefits, VA disability compensation, and more.

If recent months' inflation trend holds up, MOAA predicts the COLA will be fractional — about 0.2 percent. If inflation dropped in September, the COLA could end up being zero for the second year in a row.

Last year, the zero COLA prompted several legislators to introduce a bill that would have bypassed the CPI standard and substituted a one-time 3.9-percent COLA.

Why 3.9 percent? According to the legislators, that was the average increase in compensation for CEOs of the top 350 U.S. corporations.

We've already seen some talk of introducing a similar bill in the post-election lame-duck session.

High COLAs or low/no COLAs, the CPI is your friend.

Q & A With CICS

By Gina Harkins, Senior Staff Writer

After 15 years of war, Joint Chiefs Chairman Gen. Joseph Dunford said it's crucial that Americans continue honoring military families.

The demographics of the military have changed drastically in recent decades, Dunford said Tuesday during a leadership luncheon hosted by the National Military Family Association, a member of The Military Coalition.

As a young company commander at Camp Pendleton, Calif., in the late 1970s, Dunford said only a handful of his Marines were married. Now more than half of all servicemembers are married, he said, and another 6 percent of them are single parents.

"With that changing demographic comes a change in responsibility and change in requirements for support," Dunford said.

Military families are resilient, the chairman said, but their lifestyle can be trying. Frequent moves, training exercises, and deployments affect families. Dunford recalled watching his daughter graduate from college via livestream video from his computer and telling his son they had to move across the country during his senior year of high school.

Strong support for military families hasn't always existed, and it's crucial that it remain a priority, Dunford said. MOAA spoke to the Joint Chiefs chairman about some of the challenges facing military families after Tuesday's event. Excerpts from that interview are below, edited for clarity.

Q. You talked about the resilience of military kids, including your own. What's your advice for young officers and military family members dealing with some of the challenges that come with this lifestyle?

A. One thing that I think we found out relatively late were all the services and support that are available. One of the first things I tell young couples that are challenged is to get out there and go to some of these events.

Each of the services, for example, have orientation courses for young spouses. Many times people don't take

advantage of that so they don't learn about the services and support that is out there. I'd recommend they do that.

Q. With nearly 300,000 U.S. servicemembers currently deployed, operational tempo remains high. How can you help relieve the burden that has on military families?

A. The most important ingredient for family readiness is predictability, and that's one of the things we're really working hard on. My experience has been that folks can put up with the sacrifice, but it's the unexpected that really makes it difficult. To the max extent possible, what we're trying to do right now is to make sure that the deployment cycles are predictable for our service people and their families.

Q. With budget cuts and personnel drawdowns, what are the biggest challenges facing troops today that worry you?

A. The thing that keeps me up at night is not giving them the support they need to accomplish the mission, so that's really what we're focused on. We have high-quality men and women, and I'm really proud of that. What I want to make sure is that we're providing them with the training, equipment, and the leadership that they deserve.

Q. How can advocacy organizations like NMFA and MOAA help ensure servicemembers and their families have what they need?

A. What the services do and what I can do as a leader only go so far. When you PCS and your kids need to change schools or your spouse needs to change jobs, you have to cut through the bureaucracy. For example, we moved from the West Coast to the East Coast when my son was going to be a senior in high school. Getting the courses set, getting college applications out, and getting teacher recommendations were all challenges we confronted. But because of the policies that have been put in place, it was a lot easier for us than it was for people 20 years ago.

Same thing for spouse employment - my wife was a physical therapist and she had to be relicensed in every single state that we moved to. She had to take a test and pay a fee just to work. Now, we have reciprocity in many states now, and the reason we have that is because these support organizations fought for it.

We've been at war for 15 years, and it would be natural for people to forget the sacrifices made by military families. I think organizations like MOAA and others advocating on the Hill and frankly reminding the American people of what our families are dealing with is a really important part of the network of support that makes us who we are.

Army Halts \$105M In Cuts to MWR Programs

By Gina Harkins, Senior Staff Writer

Top Army leaders are reviewing the costs of services like child care and on-base fitness centers after funding for family and recreational programs was nearly slashed by 25 percent.

Army Secretary Eric Fanning said this week that he halted the planned \$105 million cuts to his service's morale, welfare and recreation (MWR) programs, slated to go into effect Oct. 1. That reverses an August message released by Lt. Gen. Kenneth Dahl, the head of Army Installation Management Command, in which he warned soldiers and their families to brace for significant cuts to those programs in FY 2017.

"I have put a hold on all of that so the chief and I can do a holistic review of what's being proposed to make sure that the needs of the Army, of our soldiers and families, are being met," Fanning said during the annual Association of the United States Army meeting.

The Army needs to ensure spending on MWR programs - which support base libraries, pools, child development centers, and other recreational services for soldiers and their families - is in sync with DoD and congressional goals for those funds, Fanning said.

The decision to pause the cuts was made after a DoD official urged Army officials to brief him on the necessity of the move and the impact it would have on the military community, [Military Times](#) reported Tuesday.

Reconsidering the cuts was the right move, said retired Air Force Col. Steve Strobridge, MOAA's vice president of Government Relations. Services that benefit military families too often end up on the chopping block when budgets start tightening, he said.

Army Chief of Staff Gen. Mark Milley stressed that the service needs to get this right so soldiers and their families are taken care of.

About 60 percent of the force is married with two children, Milley said, and making sure families have the resources they deserve is ultimately a readiness issue.

Soldiers' loyalties lie with their spouses and children, he said, and it's impossible for troops to "engage the enemies of our country" while deployed overseas if they're worried about the quality of their kids' schools, their families' access to medical care, or housing problems.

"If their family's not being taken care of, there's a direct correlation to their ability for them to focus on their job, whether it's training for combat or in the actual conduct of combat," Milley said. "Everything we do looks ... through the lens of readiness and how that contributes to the readiness of their force."

MOAA Legislative Update, 21 October 2016:

Diet COLA May Cause Headache:

On Oct. 18, the Bureau of Labor Statistics announced the September Consumer Price Index (CPI) - the final piece of information needed to determine the cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for military retired pay, Social Security, Survivor Benefit Plan and VA disability compensation payments, and other federal payment programs.

The result will be a minuscule 0.3 percent COLA for 2017.

The COLA will be effective Dec. 1 and will appear in the January retired pay checks.

People who retired from uniformed service between Jan. 1 and Sept. 30 also will see a 0.3 percent COLA. Those who retired after Sept. 30 won't see their first COLA until next year.

A key downside to a Social Security COLA that small is it isn't enough to cover the average senior's Medicare Part B premium increase.

By law, a person's Social Security check can't be reduced because of a Part B premium hike. That protection kicked in last year, when there was no COLA, and it will again this year for the 0.3 percent COLA.

But this protection only applies to about 70 percent of Medicare-eligibles.

It doesn't apply to the other 30 percent of people who:

- * will first start paying Medicare Part B premiums in 2017;
- * reported 2015 adjusted gross incomes above \$85,000 (single) or \$170,000 (married);
- * pay Part B premiums but aren't drawing Social Security; or
- * are eligible for both Medicare and Medicaid (states pay their Part B premiums).

By law, premiums for these groups must be raised enough to cover (a) their normally expected premium increase plus (b) whatever amount of premiums the 70 percent are grandfathered against having to pay. In other words, the four groups listed above are required to pay their own Part B premium hike and part of their neighbor's too.

When this happened with the zero-COLA situation last year, Congress stepped in with legislation protecting the four groups from having to pay extra premiums for the grandfathered 70 percent.

In these times of political and fiscal stress, there's no guarantee Congress will do the same this year. When there was no COLA for 2011, no Part B premium relief was provided.

With last year's precedent so recent, it might seem more likely they'll provide similar relief again.

However, the penalty for the 30 percent won't be as bad this year, because the 70 percent will have a small COLA to pay at least part of their normal Part B premium increase.

But the lame duck Congress that will reconvene after the election is already on the hook to pass federal funding for the rest of FY 2017, to pass a final defense authorization bill, and more. In that context, legislators may not feel as much pressure to provide special relief for what many will see as a less severe problem than last year's.

MOAA will be supporting the relief effort.

So what kind of increase are we talking about for the 30-percent groups?

There's a lot about the calculation process that's still unknown, since this year's situation with a tiny fractional COLA is unprecedented.

But MOAA offers the following chart as a "ballpark guesstimate" based on what little we know so far. We think the numbers shown will be within the price of a ballpark hot dog of what Medicare will announce sometime in the next two weeks.

2017 Monthly Medicare Part B Premium "Guesstimate" (If no legislative relief vs. budget deal)

Individual /Joint Income	2016 Premium	2017 ^a Premium	No-Relief ^b Premium
Under \$85K/ Under \$107K*	\$105/ \$122	\$110/ \$122	\$140
\$107K-160K/ \$214K-\$320K	\$171	--	\$196
\$160K-\$214K/ \$320K-\$428K	\$317	--	\$280
Above \$214K/ Above \$428K	\$390	--	\$448

* First two columns of first row show expected premiums for pre-2016 Medicare enrollees/2016 first-time Medicare Enrollees; third column of first row projects potential premium for new enrollees in 2017

a Beneficiaries protected by held-harmless provision (pre-2016 enrollees/2016 enrollees)

b Beneficiaries NOT protected by held harmless provision

New Preventative Services Now Covered by TriCare:

MOAA has been pushing for better preventative care within TRICARE for quite some time, and thankfully this week some progress was made. TRICARE announced they are now covering several preventative services that previously were uncovered or required cost-share payments from beneficiaries.

For children and families, TRICARE's benefit coverage will now be in alignment with the American Academy of Pediatrics' standards for care of well children over age 6. Beneficiaries using TRICARE Standard will no longer pay cost shares for well-child screening and preventative visits.

TRICARE also will cover Cologuard, a new effective and non-invasive colorectal cancer screening exam. Given the devastating mortality rate of late-stage colorectal cancer, providing this U.S. Preventative Task Force-approved test as an option is a crucial milestone in addressing the second-leading cause of cancer deaths.

"Cologuard coverage should encourage more people to get screened for colorectal cancer," said MOAA Director of Government Relations Capt. Kathy Beasley, USN (Ret). "MOAA

is thankful this cost-effective and safe test will be available to beneficiaries."

In the realm of women's health, new genetic counseling and genetic testing will be covered for women identified by their primary care provider as being at high risk for breast cancer. BRCA 1 or BRCA 2 gene testing will be covered for women who meet these clinical guidelines.

These revisions bring TRICARE into compliance with the most recent national task force and quality committee recommendations for preventative care.

Court Rules Against Reservist While Congress Mulls Legislative Fixes:

In 1994, Congress passed the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) to protect reservists called to active duty by requiring civilian employers to keep their job waiting for them until they returned. In recent years, some civilian employers have required employees to sign employment contracts containing clauses restricting employees from suing employers in court and requiring submission of any complaints to a mandatory arbitration process.

Last week, a federal court held that those arbitration clauses apply to reserve servicemembers seeking compliance with USERRA protections that their employers have violated.

MOAA believes USERRA protections should not be subject to mandatory arbitration, which generally is tilted to favor employers.

"Arbitration has been criticized in all types of actions, not just USERRA," said MOAA's Director of National Guard, Reserve, and Veterans Benefits Lt. Col. (select) Aniela Szymanski, USMCR. "These clauses are starting to be seriously disfavored and challenged in family law, medical malpractice, and other areas of law. Arbitrators are not government officials and don't have the same accountability judges do. The proceedings are secret and completely opaque - there is no public record. There is no right to appeal the findings. MOAA doesn't think that kind of process should be used to circumvent the clear intent of USERRA."

Sen. Richard Blumenthal (D-Conn.) and Rep. David Cicilline (D-R.I.) have introduced legislation (S. 3042 and H.R. 5426, respectively) that would invalidate mandatory arbitration agreements in USERRA actions.

"No one should be forced into a shadow justice system that consistently favors big corporations and other repeat players - a system that operates without transparency or clear precedent," said Sen. Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.), a cosponsor of the Senate bill.

Indeed, the very judge that decided the Ziober case said in his opinion, "The Supreme Court and this court have repeatedly affirmed the principle that statutes concerning federal employment rights for military members are to be liberally construed for the benefit of those who left private life to serve their country in its hour of great need."

Please send your elected officials a MOAA-suggested message supporting [S.3042](#) and [H.R. 5426](#), The Justice for Servicemembers Act.

Holy Macra! New Medicare/TriCare Payment System Coming:

Last year, after years of lobbying by MOAA and others, Congress passed a historic solution to replace the flawed Medicare payment formula that previously caused annual threats of 20-percent cuts in Medicare and TRICARE payments to doctors.

Those annual threats caused many doctors to consider dropping Medicare and TRICARE patients.

To fix that, Congress passed the Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act, known as MACRA. Its concept is to pay medical providers for the value of the care they deliver, instead of the fee-for-service model that pays a flat fee for each appointment or service.

The intent of value-based care is to move toward linking payments to a patient's health outcomes and quality of care.

The four most beautiful words in the English language: *I told you so.*



JAYHAWK CHAPTER MOAA

A membership meeting will be held **Tuesday, 15 November 2016**,
at the newly remodeled Lawrence Country Club.

Dinner cost is \$24.00/meal.

The Program: Our speaker for the November meeting will be Mr. Tom Boos,
VA Chief of Strategic Management & Planning.
He will cover a couple of topics related to the VA and VA benefits and services
and then open up the discussion for questions and comments from the floor.

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

The Menu: Tossed salad with ranch, house focaccia with olive oil & parm,
roasted pork with caramelized shallot jus, horseradish whipped potatoes,
seasonal vegetables, Chef's choice dessert
Vegetarian Option: Butternut squash ravioli

**Send your reservation and check payable to Jayhawk Chapter MOAA
to arrive no later than Wednesday, 9 November 2016, to:
CAPT Jim Cooper, 1115 Stone Meadows Drive, Lawrence, KS 66049**

***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 Jim Cooper, 1115 Stone Meadows Drive, Lawrence, KS 66049

MOAA WEBSITE: www.moaa.org
KANSAS COUNCIL WEBSITE: www.kansasmoaa.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.**

Tentative 2016 Meeting Schedule:

Tuesday 15 November

***WE WISH EACH OF YOU A
JOYOUS THANKSGIVING AND
A MERRY CHRISTMAS
PLUS A HAPPY 2017 !!***



One Association, One Voice. Yours

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