



Jayhawk Chapter MOAA Newsletter



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September Program:

Our speaker will be a student from Haskell University who will talk on his/her tribal culture and the student perspective of what Haskell offers the young Native American today

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President's Comments. . .

Greetings fellow Jayhawk Chapter members and hello from downtown Minneapolis.



Dawn and I rode the motorcycle up here with the American Legion Riders from Hutchison, Kansas through Kansas, Missouri, Iowa, Wisconsin and Minnesota and are now here attending the American Legion's 100th National Convention.

We recently experienced an interesting primary election in Kansas and now the campaign season up to the midterms. No end of quiet, truthful, considerate of others advertisements and announcements to be sure. The important point, study the issues and candidates and get out and vote for your choice. As we have seen recently each vote does count.

Fall is approaching, as evidenced by both Haskell and KU being back in session. The traffic is back and the students are all back in town. K through 12 is back in session as well so when you are in town watch for all the pedestrians. Kids and students are everywhere. KU's football season is getting ready to start up and everyone is anticipating a better season (of course only way currently is up). Sad news recently though, one of the iconic annual events has become a victim of change, Band Day has been cancelled. Seems changing the schedule to promote a less than successful program is worth the sacrifice of one of the KU Band and music department's more successful recruiting events.

The KU Army ROTC Department will be providing the first Color Guard of the school year at our 18 September meeting. I am looking forward to welcoming the Jayhawk Battalion Cadets and wishing them another highly successful year. Jim is getting another informative program lined up as well.

Look forward to seeing you all the 18th of September at the Lawrence Country Club and have a safe Labor Day weekend.

George

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* Reservations should be sent
to Jim Cooper by
13 September



JAYHAWK CHAPTER NEWS



CONDOLENCES

Diane Marie Darwin, wife of LTC Dave Darwin, passed away quietly in her home on 9 August 2018 from the effects of pancreatic cancer.

Diane was born on 1 November 1945 in College Point, New York to Girard R. (Bob) and Dorothy Hausman Mayer. She attended St. Anastasia School in Douglaston, NY and graduated from Bayside High School. Diane attended the State University of New York at Cortland, where she was member of Nu Sigma Chi sorority, receiving a bachelor's degree in math education in 1967. She later taught in Binghamton, NY and Fayetteville, NC. While at Cortland, Diane met Dave who attended nearby Cornell University. Diane and Dave married on 29 June 1968. They had two children, Sam and Lorraine, and lived in North Carolina, Virginia, and Illinois for a short time. The family moved to Lawrence in 1974 when Dave accepted a position of Assistant Professor of Civil Engineering at the University of Kansas.

Diane received a BS in Civil Engineering from KU in 1979. In the following years, she worked for the Douglas County Public Works Department, took graduate courses at KU, and devoted her time to raising her children. Throughout the years, Diane was an active member of self-help groups and fitness (PATH) classes. She greatly enjoyed gardening and yard work. Diane continued with these interests well into her diagnosis.

Diane and Dave celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in June.

Diane is survived by her husband Dave; her son Sam; her daughter, Lorraine and husband Steve Marroulis of Catonsville, MD; her sister, Marilyn Skerrett of Phoenix and family; and her brother, Gerard (Jerry) Mayer and wife Lyn of Endwell, NY and family.

Diane's memorial service was held 18 August at Corpus Christi Catholic Church. Private inurnment will take place at a later date in Pioneer Cemetery on the University of Kansas Campus.

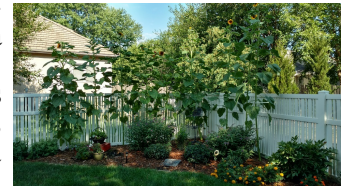
The family suggested memorials to the Douglas County Visiting Nurses Association, 200 Maine St, Suite C, Lawrence, KS 66044 or to the KU Endowment Association, PO Box 928, Lawrence, KS 66044-0928 to support the Department of Civil, Environmental and Architectural Engineering.

PERSONAL NEWS

From David Kent: In July our son Peter and family visited us from Germany. He is a GS-14 working for USAFE Hqs at Ramstein AFB. His wife Sandra recently was promoted to COL in USAF Reserve as JAG officer. Granddaughter Rachel (HS Jr) was also visiting potential colleges on their visit, including KU. She stayed on a week after the others went home, and we drove her to Madison, WI to visit my alma mater, U. of Wisconsin.



Otherwise, my success with growing sunflowers continues, this year's crop averages 12 ft tall with lots of blooms.



From Dean Bevan: I'm organizing a "Short Play Festival" for Theatre Lawrence, Nov. 16-17. These will be scripts submitted by "Heartland" playwrights – Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, Iowa. I'll also be directing one of them. Auditions coming up, October 22. I reported in the last issue that my "Grim Reaper" was performed in June in Plano, TX. In July, it was also performed in Greenville, NC. Both won play contests.

From Mike Kelley: The 2018 Veterans Day Parade planning is moving forward steadily. The committee is happy to report that the KU Band has accepted our invitation to march with the procession on Sunday November 11th. If anyone needs more information or would like to assist the planning committee please contact Mike. You may also visit their web site at www.LawrenceVeteransDay.org or the Facebook page at Lawrence Veterans Day Parade.

Also, I visited San Antonio recently as a tourist and toured the Alamo for the first time. My take: the history of the liberation of Texas exemplifies courage, persistence, and fortitude. If you are in Texas you should not miss visiting the Alamo!

From Your Editors: Shirley's grand-daughter gave birth just before midnight Saturday, 25 August to a little boy. Chase James Mashburn weighed in at 5 lbs., 12 oz., and measured 18 inches. This makes Shirley a great-grandmother!!!

**The newsletter is only as good as the material available,
so each member is requested to forward to the editors news and other items of interest.**



Army News *LTC Tracey Olson, USA*

Greetings Jayhawk Chapter!

The Jayhawk Battalion had a successful summer training cycle and is looking forward to our fall events as we celebrate our 100th anniversary as a program.

This summer, the battalion graduated 18 cadets from Cadet Summer Training Advanced Camp at Fort Knox, Kentucky. The caliber of training included three weeks in the field with a 12-mile foot march at the end. One cadet participated in Basic Camp, which focuses on developing sophomores basic soldiering in preparation for their junior year and evaluation the following summer at Advanced Camp.

Training brought cadets to all corners of the world. Cadets traveled to Romania and Vietnam and participated in Cadet Troop Leader Training (CTLT) in South Korea and all major Army bases in the continental US. CTLT gives cadets the opportunity to shadow active duty platoon leaders for three weeks as they do day-to-day operations.

Fall semester will be an exciting time for the Jayhawk Battalion. We are currently planning for our semester field training exercise in late September,

which will focus on basic rifle marksmanship and tactical exercises. Our Ranger Challenge team looks forward to competing against other programs during the Third Brigade competition. For the second consecutive year, we will be sending a team of cadets to participate in the Army Ten Miler in Washington, D.C.

In October, the Jayhawk Battalion will host a German Sergeant Major to conduct the German Armed Forces Proficiency Badge competition to award to new cadets that successfully complete the required events. The competition includes marksmanship, physical fitness, swimming and a ruck march.

To stay informed about activities of the Jayhawk Battalion, like us on Facebook or follow us on Twitter.

CPT Jonathon Heller
Asst. Professor of Military Science



Navy News *Capt Trenton Lennard, USN*



Greeting From the Jayhawk Battalion!

This past month has been a rewarding time for members of the Battalion as they return from their summer cruises with a wealth of new knowledge and skills learned in the fleet. Along with our returning members, the Battalion welcomed 11 new Midshipmen into the program following New Student Orientation (NSO). The Jayhawk Battalion looks forward to a successful and strong year.

New Student Orientation concluded on Saturday August, 18. This weeklong orientation gave the new students an introduction to basic military life and started them on their path to becoming future Navy and Marine Corps officers. This intense week focused on drill, formation runs, swimming qualification, PT, customs and courtesies, and life at KU. Ultimately, NSO brought the new students together and forced them to

work as a team. After the Swearing-In Ceremony, the Battalion celebrated with the new midshipmen and their families with a barbeque.



Of all the summer training, notable assignments were that of MIDN Wenske and Cooper. MIDN 1/C Kurt Wenske went on his First Class Cruise to NAS Lemoore, CA where he was assigned to Strike Fighter Squadron 22, the Fighting Redcocks. At the air station MIDN Wenske was able to interact with both pilots and Weapons System Officers, and since the Redcocks operate the two seat variant of the Super Hornet, he

had multiple opportunities to fly in the aft cockpit of the F/A-18F.

MIDN 2/C Cooper traveled to Guam for a second-class cruise to board the USS Ashville (SSN-758) to see in-port operations. He was with five other midshipmen from different NROTC Units. MIDN Cooper was able to practice his submarining skills on several trainers. The students then transferred to the USS Michigan (SSGN-727) to transit to Japan. On board, MIDN Cooper was allowed to stand both the helm watch under instruction and broad band operator watch under

instruction as well as operate the periscope, and sit on the bridge while surfaced. \

All the midshipmen have arrived back in Lawrence and are engaged in KU academics as well as Jayhawk Battalion activities. They are a motivated and high performing group of young women and men. Thank you for your continued support of the Jayhawk Battalion as we look forward to a challenging yet productive year!

Capt Trenton Lennard



Air Force News

LtCol Nichole Phelan, USAF

Hello from Detachment 280, the Flying Jayhawks!

My name is Nikki Phelan and I recently took command of the Air Force ROTC detachment from Lt Col Bill Pastewait. Bill has been promoted to the rank of Colonel and moved to a job at the Pentagon. I returned to the United States from Ramstein Airbase, Germany, in July, where I was the Director of the Special Operations Liaison Element. I have spent my entire career as an Air Commando, Air Force Special Operations Command, MC-130 navigator, with hundreds of combat flying hours and six years of formalized teaching as an USAF Weapons School instructor. I am honored to serve as the Kansas University Detachment Commander and mentor future leaders for the Air Force.

We also welcomed back Capt Garrett Carson who was on temporary duty this summer at Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama. Capt Carson was a Flight Training Officer responsible for the training of over 2400 cadets during multiple field training sessions.

Detachment update:

We are excited to start the new academic year at KU with a new class of cadets. We have 57 new students which is our largest recruiting class in the last decade. We held our new Student Orientation on 16–17 August. This two-day orientation allowed us to offer an introductory Air Force ROTC experience for incoming cadets.

We've got many events on the horizon and a great year ahead of us. I look forward to interacting with the MOAA Jayhawk Chapter and can't say enough about all the great things I was told of the support you provide. Thanks for helping us develop the best officers to the United States Air Force.

Very Respectfully,

LtCol Nikki Phelan

Commander, Air Force ROTC Det 280

Flag Etiquette:

While watching the Baseball Hall of Fame on television, 29 July, during the National Anthem not one of the Hall of Fame initiates shown gave the proper hand-over-heart salute. (Veterans can use the hand salute.)

It is amazing how many people in our great nation do not know this is the proper salute during the presentation of the flag, the Pledge of Allegiance, the playing of Taps and the National Anthem.

Jayhawk Chapter of MOAA Legislative Corner

by Mike Miller, LCDR, USN, (Ret); Legislative Chairman

With the Kansas Legislature currently not being in session, there has been little to report since my last article. There have been some discussions at the Chapter Board Meetings and at the Kansas Council of Chapters Meetings to develop preliminary items for the 2019 Legislative Issues. Over the next couple of months there will be meetings scheduled with the numerous Kansas Veterans Service Organizations (VSO's) that will result in developing a list of issues to present to the appropriate Legislative Committees and individual Legislators. Moving forward, if you have any ideas and/or issues you would like to discuss please let me or any Jayhawk Chapter Board Member know, and we can make that happen.

MOAA NEWSLETTER ADVOCACY

This is a summary of the many items MOAA produces each week on legislative activities.
Those who have e-mail receive the full MOAA Newsletter each week upon completing application..

MOAA Newsletter Advocacy, 05 July 2018:
NDAAs Approval is Imminent – Act Now and Make a Difference
The House and Senate have already passed their respective versions of the defense bill with many similarities most likely to be in the final bill signed into law. Conversely, there are a few areas where the chambers are not aligned; this is where you can make an impact. Looking over the last few months, we can see where your engagement has paid off:

April: 170 MOAA members participated in our annual [Storming The Hill event](#), highlighting two key concerns we wanted Congress to act on: supporting a Military Pay and Benefits, specifically the 2.6% pay raise as aligned with the Employment Cost Index; and Chapter 61 Retirees with the same concurrent receipt considerations given to those able to complete a full 20 year career.

The first topic was easier to articulate and members of Congress were mostly familiar with ECI and the need to support pay and benefits essential to recruiting and retaining an all-volunteer force. Still, we cannot take for granted approval from either chamber given all their competing priorities.

The second topic, however, was more complex and drew members and their staffs into valuable discussions. Many on Capitol Hill were unaware of the impact medical retirement has on those who served and their families—those who were unable to complete their career. The stories of people and the impact on their lives brought to life this important issue. In addition, the informative brochure and graphics painted a clear picture and generated optimism this might be the year to advance our cause.

May: The full House completed its work on the NDAA on May 24, by a vote of [351- 66](#). Of note was the full 2.6 percent pay raise as requested, troop strength increases, and housing allowances left intact.

June: The Senate received the defense bill from the House and began their review of the legislation to include amendments submitted by senators. Of interest in these amendments was Sen. Dean Heller's (R-Nev.) introduction of an amendment to provide concurrent receipt to retirees with a less than 50 percent disability rating, and another amendment targeting Chapter 61 retirees who were the subject of our storming efforts in April.

Neither of these amendments survived the full Senate but the effort to submit the amendment was an encouraging sign that MOAA's storming efforts made a difference and provide more fuel to continue into the next Congress.

On June 18, the Senate approved their version of the bill [85-10](#). The Senate likewise approved the 2.6 percent military pay raise, a slightly less increase in troop strength, and avoided changes to housing allowances.

One significant difference in the Senate's bill, if approved, would result in yet another round of TRICARE fee increases. At issue is the proposed repeal of the grandfathering of current beneficiaries entering military service prior to January 2018, passed in the FY 2017 NDAA.

It is imperative we keep this issue on our scopes and get this provision axed from the defense bill.

MOAA President and CEO Lt. Gen. Dana Atkins, USAF (Ret) sent a letter to members of Congress putting the final changes on the defense bill, highlighting MOAA's concerns with this proposal.

Your voice matters and we need you to exercise it here again.

Please send your elected officials a [MOAA-suggested message](#).

MOAA Newsletter Advocacy, 12 July 2018:
Why Must Congress Lean on Veterans To Fund Veteran Benefits?

As advocates for military personnel, retirees, veterans, their families, and survivors approach Congress an inequity - often a need for a new benefit or revision to an existing benefit - they often are met with a legislative brick wall known as the "pay-as-you-go," or PAYGO, rule.

PAYGO is both an ever-present obstacle for new spending initiatives, large or small, and yet it can be ignored entirely or circumvented by congressional leaders.

Recall, for example, how floor speeches about budget deficits destroying the futures of our children and grandchildren, even by our most fiscally conservative lawmakers, disappeared on Capitol Hill as lawmakers prepared to vote on massive tax cuts for corporations, the wealthiest of Americans and, of course, for a majority of common taxpayers, though the latter tax breaks are only temporary.

By contrast, the long campaign to eliminate the "widows tax" for 66,000 surviving spouses of service members who either died on active duty or died in retirement of conditions linked to time in service, continues to be blocked by PAYGO, as do multiple other ideas involving higher benefits or entitlements.

RELATED: [Surviving Spouse Pens Powerful Message to Eliminate 'Widows Tax'](#)

The military widows tax is also known as the Survivor Benefit Plan-Disability Indemnity Compensation (SBP-DIC) offset because these surviving spouses see SBP payments cut dollar-for-dollar by amounts they receive in tax-free DIC from VA. With Congress deciding it can't afford to end the offset, it moved last year to make permanent, and to adjust annually for inflation, a Special Survivor Indemnity Allowance (SSIA) started in 2008 to ease the impact of the offset.

And yet to make SSIA permanent, Rep. Mac Thornberry (R-Texas), chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, said he had to find a "pay for," as PAYGO required, by reducing current "mandatory" spending elsewhere. The only such accounts controlled by the armed services committees are the retirement trust fund and another trust established in 2001 to cover medical costs for service elderly under the TRICARE for Life and mail order pharmacy programs.

Thornberry and colleagues therefore chose to pay for permanent SSIA by accepting a Senate and DoD proposal to raise pharmacy co-payments for TRICARE users, including services for the elderly. House conferees, he said, were reluctant to do it but understood the Senate's argument that higher pharmacy fees made mandatory budget dollars available to fix an issue for surviving spouses.

Without cutting some benefits to create space in mandatory VA spending accounts, VA committees contend, they wouldn't be able to fund VA health care and disability compensation for Blue Water Navy veterans with illnesses on the list of conditions that VA presumes were caused by exposure to wartime defoliants.

Beneficiary vs. Beneficiary

Military associations and veterans' groups increasingly are frustrated by PAYGO restrictions as they fight to help currently serving military and veterans. Some contend they are being told more often than ever not to press for new benefits unless ready to identify fees to be raised or benefits to be trimmed to pay for them.

"Attaching any cost of [improved] benefits squarely on the beneficiary, as opposed to the nation as a whole, diminishes the selfless service and in-kind payments already made by those in uniform," wrote retired Air Force Lt. Gen. Dana T. Atkins, president and CEO of MOAA, to the House and Senate chairs and ranking members of the armed services committee May 9.

"This resourcing option places the financial burden solely on our nation's 1.3 percent who serve or have retired from service and relieves the remaining 98.7 percent of our citizens of any responsibility to pay for these costs," Atkins added.

Another concern is that when authorizing committees finally do reach agreement to help a particular group, such as Blue Water Navy veterans, it can mean dampening benefits for others, which pits deserving groups against one another and weakens military associations and veteran groups generally.

MOAA Newsletter Advocacy, 19 July 2018:

Big Changes to Post 9/11 G.I. Bill: What You Need To Know

Note from MOAA: This story was updated July 27 to reflect further clarifications on GI Bill transferability.]

The Pentagon on July 12 announced significant changes to the transferability of the Post 9/11 G.I. Bill. [The initial news](#) triggered a number of concerned questions from service members and spouses. Here's what you need to know:

What is the new eligibility requirement? Effective July 12, 2019, servicemembers desiring to transfer their Post 9/11 GI Bill benefit to a spouse or child(ren) will need to do so **no later than** their 16th year of service. Prior to this announcement, there were no restrictions on when servicemembers could transfer educational benefits to family members. The requirement for the servicemember to have at least six years of service to apply for transfer remains in effect.

Why make this change? Congress gave the Pentagon the authority to control changes in the transferability policy when they passed the law in 2008. The transferability option was viewed by Congressional leadership at the time as an important retention tool for the services to retain top talent. A key part of the legislation: With every proposed change to the policy, DoD has to notify Congress of their intentions and the reason behind the change. DoD must also provide advance notice to the currently serving force - in this case one year from the date of notification.

Who is affected? All currently serving members of the uniformed services and their families.

As of July 19, all of the services are issuing even tougher guidelines, according to a [Military.Com report](#). Effective immediately, service members who have committed to 10 years of service and have already served at least six, but are prevented from completing the last four, are unable to transfer the benefit.

What should I do?

Decide your actions based on your career time in service and your personal family situation. For example, if you are a servicemember with 16 or more years of service, and you are considering transferring your benefit, you should do so before the new policy takes effect on July 12, 2019. Bottom line, regardless of where you are in your career, if you are considering transferring the benefit to one or more of your dependents, it's best to do so now, before the new rule takes effect.

According to DoD, the servicemember can make later adjustments, such as percentage amounts among dependents, or between spouse and children, but only after they have transferred the benefit. Servicemembers can also transfer the benefit back to themselves if their family situation changes.

You can find more information on [MOAA's website](#) as well as other information regarding the Post 9/11 G.I. bill on both

[the DoD](#) and the service websites as well as at your local installation education center.

MOAA Fights Cuts to USPHS Ranks

MOAA joined members of The Military Coalition to speak out against a White House proposal to slash the ranks of the commissioned corps of the U.S. Public Health Service.

The plan, as part of a broader effort to reshape the federal workforce, calls for capping the number of commissioned corps to 4,000 officers. Currently, USPHS has about 6,500 officers. The change, if enacted, would result in a 40 percent reduction in the number of officers in the commissioned corps. The plan also would require officers to begin their careers in hard-to-fill areas or to deploy to public health emergencies at least every three years.

Instead of reducing the size of the federal workforce, those eliminated billets would convert to civilian positions within the Department of Health and Human Services. Policy makers assume federal civilians cost less than commissioned officers do.

MOAA Newsletter Advocacy, 26 July 2018:

Military Pay Raise, No New TRICARE Fees or BAH Cuts: A Win for MOAA Advocacy

No reduction in Basic Allowance for Housing.

[No new TRICARE fees.](#)

MOAA's success at achieving these important goals in the final legislation came from working closely with congressional leadership and staffs, support at the grass roots level from our membership in answering our calls to action, and a concerted effort with our partners in The Military Coalition.

As House Armed Services Committee Chair Rep. Mac Thornberry first stated back in May, "Restoring readiness while increasing the capability and capacity of our armed forces is a key focus of this year's defense policy bill."

Likewise, members of Congress consistently emphasized readiness and increasing capacity throughout their preparation of this year's defense authorization bill. They kept as their focal point our nation's new defense strategy released under Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis back in January.

MOAA joins with our coalition partners to [thank the leadership of the armed services committees and their staffs](#) in Congress for their hard work on behalf of our servicemembers and veterans and their families.

Congress Directs Army Secretary To Finalize Arlington Burial Criteria

The House and Senate have come to terms on dozens of conflicting provisions in the annual defense bill. Arlington National Cemetery, separated from the halls of Congress by the Potomac River, found its way into this year's legislation due to the gradual filling up of burial plots. Only a couple decades worth of unused plots remain at current burial rates.

MOAA Newsletter Advocacy, 02 August 2018:

MOAA Survey: TRICARE Beneficiaries Are Increasingly Dissatisfied

The results for MOAA's latest TRICARE survey confirm what many of us have been suspecting: Beneficiaries aren't happy.

Beneficiaries' overall satisfaction with the TRICARE program has decreased, according to the survey. Compared to survey results from December 2017, the new data shows increasing dissatisfaction across all categories, including provider choice, access to providers, and especially among medication costs. Over 8,500 TRICARE beneficiaries responded to the most recent survey.

[Related: 17,000 MOAA Members Rallied Together to Prevent TRICARE Fee Increases]

Survey respondents indicated concerns regarding the costs of their health care. The results revealed some beneficiary categories are more likely than others to alter their health care decisions based upon increased costs.

Beneficiaries who identified themselves as spouses, enlisted, and either using TRICARE Prime or Select were more likely than all others to cancel or postpone treatment out of cost concerns. TRICARE for Life respondents continue to show the greatest overall satisfaction with their health care.

The cost shares can be staggering. Most people are healthy, and they are not aware of these kinds of costs. They don't react to the increases that have occurred. Only when they need medical attention do most beneficiaries understand the importance and size of the increases and new fees.

Senate Sends Defense Bill to President: Pay Raise is In, TRICARE Fees Are Out

On Wednesday, the Senate voted overwhelmingly 87 to 10 to pass the FY19 defense authorization bill. The bill now heads to President Donald Trump's desk for signature. Once signed, it will become the 58th consecutive year the legislation will have become law.

MOAA President and CEO, Lt. Gen. Dana Atkins, USAF (Ret) said of the bill's passage, "This has been an incredibly busy year for MOAA's advocacy mission on the Hill, and the final version of the NDAA shows evidence of the hard work from our team in Washington and tens of thousands of the MOAA members who took action in writing their legislators on a number of key issues. The inclusion of the 2.6 percent pay raise for the troops, and the exclusion of potential TRICARE fee increases are two big victories, as is the decision to maintain BAH at current levels. Thank you to the members of Congress and leaders who sat down with MOAA leadership in recent weeks to hear our concerns and ensure the NDAA includes fair and prudent measures that do not erode service members' hard-earned benefits."

The last time Congress passed a defense bill this early was over 20 years ago with the FY 1997 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). To put that into context, a freshly minted second lieutenant or ensign entering service today has not had a defense bill passed on time in his or her entire life.

The last time a defense bill was enacted before September was in the FY 1978 NDAA.

Boots at the Border - National Guard Impressing Customs and Border Patrol

In the few months the National Guard has been serving on the U.S. border with Mexico, Customs and Border Protection (CBP) in Arizona has credited them with the seizure of over 11,000 pounds of marijuana, cocaine and heroin, and with over 11,000 apprehensions thanks to their identifications made by aircraft and camera. It was clear during a hearing last week that both Customs and Border Patrol and the National Guard are both very satisfied with the arrangement of having the National Guard remain at the border for the foreseeable future.

The mission now has a name, Operation Guardian Support, and the exact parameters are for the National Guard to provide temporary air support in the form of light and medium lift helicopters, infrastructure support, such as road maintenance and vegetation clearing, operational support, such as fleet maintenance and repair, law enforcement communications assistance, and surveillance support such as surveillance camera operations. CBP has characterized the National Guard's assistance as a significant force multiplier.

One of the reasons may be because the CBP is currently understaffed by over 1,000 employees and agents. The agency has experienced a hiring and retention problem for years resulting in the agents they do have being overtasked with administrative and logistical duties that take them away from their mission of interdiction and apprehension. One example

provided by CBP of the impact the National Guard presence has had was:

National Guard personnel provided vehicle mechanics to help complete an inspection of a station's fleet. During the inspection, the National Guard mechanics identified and repaired more than 80 vehicles with suspension issues that could have led to significant safety hazards for Border Patrol Agents patrolling in isolated areas. As the Fleet Garage said, "Logistically speaking, an issue like this could have caused a major nightmare for our garage staff. But with National Guard members helping, it did not affect our fleet readiness. National Guard personnel helped us complete the inspections and repairs within two days. Without the Guard, it would have taken weeks to resolve the problems."

When questioned by Congress regarding the duration of the National Guard's support on the border, CBP said the Guard is funded through the end of this fiscal year and they expect ongoing support thereafter. The National Guard similarly seemed to be willing to continue to support the mission.

While the Guard explained, thus far, there has been no impact on their states' National Guard to support overseas missions they are otherwise tasked to support, this may change in the future. For example, Major General John F. Nichols, Adjutant General of the Texas National Guard, noted he currently has 20 percent of this members activated with 2,000 deployed guardsmen in places like Africa, Sanai, Afghanistan, Iraq, and Kuwait. Texas currently has 1,200 guardsmen on the border. Eventually, other states beyond those on the border will be required to contribute to Operation Guardian Support to sustain the mission. In Texas, other states have already committed aviation assets including Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, South Carolina, Oklahoma and Florida.

MOAA Newsletter Advocacy, 09 August 2018: Where's the Money?

Now that the FY 2019 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) has been sent to the White House for President Donald Trump's signature, one might be inclined to ask, "Where's the money to pay for the \$717 billion legislation touted to rebuild and modernize our military force?"

Great question. Like most major advocacy efforts these days on Capitol Hill, victory often is clouded by some obstacle, usually having to do with congressional wrangling over how to prioritize federal spending.

The sweeping defense bill made its way through the halls of Congress in record time. [In remarks on the Senate floor](#), Sen. Jim Inhofe (R-Okla.), a senior member of the Armed Services Committee, said the last time the annual defense bill made it to the president's desk this early was in 1996.

Senate Has 'Serious Concerns' With Blue Water Navy Bill After Recent Hearing

When the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee held a hearing last week regarding the blue-water Navy bill that passed the House in late June by a vote of 382-0, it did not seem as convinced as the House was about the bill. Two primary opposition points were discussed during the hearing: the "science" behind proving blue-water Navy veterans were exposed to Agent Orange and the way an expansion of benefits will be paid for.

The "science" – The VA continually has beat the drum to Congress that it should not expand the presumption of Agent Orange exposure to blue-water Navy veterans because the "science" does not support it.

MOAA Newsletter Advocacy, 16 August 2018: President Trump Approves Pay Raise For Troops, No TRICARE Fee Increases

President Donald Trump on Monday afternoon approved H.R. 515, the John S. McCain National Defense Authorization

Act for Fiscal Year 2019. The President signed the legislation in front of huge crowd at Fort Drum, N.Y.

"There is no better place than right here at Fort Drum to celebrate its passage. No better place," President Trump told the cheering crowd, which included many uniformed service members. "After years of devastating cuts, we're now rebuilding our military like we never have before. Ever. Because we know that to survive, and having that survival of our freedom, it depends upon the might of our military."

The last time Congress passed a defense bill this early was over 20 years ago with the FY 1997 NDAA.

"The NDAA is a great example of bi-partisan support for our military," said MOAA President and CEO Lt. Gen. Dana T. Atkins, (USAF Ret.). "Our Congress, and president, by signing this bill into law, recognize the selfless service of those in uniform by providing a proper pay raise and housing allowances. They also recognize the need to increase troop strength to support Secretary Mattis' National Defense Strategy."

The legislation includes a 2.6 percent increase in basic pay for troops, which President Trump described as "the biggest increase in a decade."

President Trump also highlighted "\$11 billion for military construction, including family housing."

"Every day the military is fighting for us, and now we are fighting for you, 100 percent," President Trump told the troops.

Other highlights of the FY2019 NDAA include:

Authorization for active duty end-strength increases over FY 2018 levels for each service to put them better in line to meet the requirements of the National Defense Strategy (485,741 in the Army, 331,900 in the Navy, 186,100 in the Marine Corps, and 325,720 in the Air Force).

No increases to TRICARE fees.

Authorization for \$40 million in DoD supplemental impact aid and \$10 million in impact aid for severely disabled military children.

Get a Glimpse Inside VA's Major Overhaul

Do you remember the VA MISSION Act- the massive, most comprehensive health care reform bill passed out of Congress in over 25 years and signed into law by President Donald Trump on June 6?

VA has quietly begun working on implementing these major changes but recognizes it can't do so without veterans' help.

VA wants to know what questions veterans have about the VA MISSION Act as VA moves forward in rolling out these huge health system changes.

While MOAA and other veteran service organizations (VSO) have started working with VA to implement the legislation, veterans are central to making the transformation smooth and in helping the department meet the very tight deadline mandated by Congress.

Passage of the VA MISSION Act signaled Congress' readiness to implement major changes in VA's health care system - seen by some congressional leaders as long overdue reform.

One of the most significant changes veterans will see in the next few months is the elimination of the [Veterans Choice Program](#), established in 2014, to provide temporary relief and help VA rebuild internal capacity to reduce long wait times for veterans seeking health care. A new, streamlined community care program will replace Choice and consolidate multiple community care programs currently managed by VA into a single program.

A few other major changes veterans can expect to see are:

- * the expansion of VA's comprehensive caregiver support program, opening up the program to eligible pre-9/11 veterans;

- * veterans and their doctors will be able to decide the best option on where the veteran should get their care, whether inside VA or in the community;
- * more telehealth programs; and,
- * walk-in health care services with local community providers.

What would normally take three to five years to implement such massive system changes, Congress gave VA one year from the enactment of the MISSION Act to replace the Choice Program and two years to implement the caregiver program expansion.

Last week, VA provided MOAA and other VSOs a little peek under the tent as to the rough timelines the department is working under to combine and implement the new community care program and walk-in care services over the next year. Here's generally what we know:

Phase 1, June - October 2018. Build the operating structure, access and eligibility criteria, new veteran care contract agreements, and new competency standards for community providers; and, draft regulations.

Phase 2, November 2018 - February 2019. Complete and test the operating structure and elements initiated in Phase 1; continue rollout of the new community care provider network; begin educating and training VA staff; and, finalized regulations.

Phase 3, March - June 2019. Transition and begin operation of the new walk-in care and community care program; continue educating VA staff; continue rollout of new community care provider network; begin using new competency standards for community providers; publish regulations; and, end the Choice Program.

So here's what MOAA needs from you.

We need you to send us your questions about the VA MISSION Act that you want VA to answer and communicate to veterans now and throughout the implementation of the system reforms.

To help get you started, here are a couple questions MOAA has already provided to VA we think veterans will want to know:

- * How can veterans expect VA to communicate with them as progress is made in implementing the MISSION Act and how can veterans provide feedback throughout the process?
- * What does walk-in care mean and will I be charged for getting this care outside of my VA medical center?

Now, what questions are on your mind?

Please send your questions to legis@moaa.org and we will share your questions with VA as well any communication and marketing materials as they become available.

Will the Administration Weaken Oversight of Payday Lenders Who Prey on Troops?

The Trump administration is reportedly considering changes to how it enforces the Military Lending Act (MLA), a move that could make it easier for payday lenders to prey on servicemembers.

Payday lenders often seek out young servicemembers "in a panic to find financial resources to fulfill their immediate needs (emergency travel, car payments, overdue bills, etc.), or to make an impulse purchase spurred by aggressive push marketing, without fully considering the financial ramifications of taking out a loan that is not predicated on their ability to repay," according to the Defense Department. Many of the men and women who volunteer to serve in the military enlist immediately after graduating from high school. Understandably, they have limited experience in financial matters, have little to no credit history, and are easy targets.

Since 2011, enforcement of the MLA has provided over \$130 million in relief to military families.

But now, according to internal documents shared with NPR and other news outlets, the agency tasked with enforcing the MLA is looking to dial back its monitoring efforts.

[ACT NOW: Send a [MOAA-suggested message](#) urging the White House to reconsider this proposal.]

This agency is called the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, and its interim head is Mick Mulvaney, who was appointed by President Trump. According to news reports, the agency says it lacks the legal authority to provide proactive oversight of the payday loan industry; as a result, the administration is looking into reducing oversight while continuing to investigate individual complaints of abuse.

Mulvaney says the agency would still intend to ask Congress for the legislative authority to resume proactive enforcement. However, NPR reports, "It is unclear if Congress would do that to spur the CFPB to return to its previous level of enforcement."

Despite providing some financial training to servicemembers, DoD says "a significant number of servicemembers, especially in the lower ranks of enlisted personnel, still fall victim to easy credit widely available around bases or online. Education does not trump the marketing of these loans and the easy availability of quick cash with few questions asked.

Weakening oversight of the MLA will have a negative impact on readiness. Unregulated predatory lenders represent a serious danger to national security because a servicemember experiencing debt-related stresses may be less focused on the mission - potentially compromising not only his or her safety, but also that of the entire unit. It can cost servicemembers security clearances, letters of reprimand, loss of promotions, or even separation from the military.

The MLA, originally sponsored by Sen. Bill Nelson (D-Fla.), Sen. Jim Talent (R-Mo.), and Rep. Sam Graves (R-Mo.), provides servicemembers and their dependents with protections from predatory lending practices. Congress tasked the Defense Secretary to survey troops, financial counselors and legal assistance attorneys to determine the impact and prevalence of high-cost loans in the FY 2013 defense bill.

DoD worked with federal regulators to study the issue and developed a number of protections for servicemembers and their families, including:

- * A 36 percent cap on the annual interest rate charged for covered credit products -including credit cards - referred to as the Military Annual Percentage Rate.
- * Holding creditors responsible for providing military borrowers with additional disclosures, including a statement that they should seek other options than high-cost credit - to include financial counseling and assistance from the Military Aid Societies
- * Prohibiting creditors from requiring servicemembers to submit to arbitration or waive their rights under the Servicemember's Civil Relief Act (SCRA)
- * Expanding the definition of "consumer credit" covered by the MLA and bringing any closed- or open-end loans within the scope of the regulation, with the exception of loans secured by real estate or a purchase-money loan (including loans to finance the purchase of a vehicle).

The actions of these predators must be regulated, and the federal government must have authority to provide necessary oversight.

MOAA Newsletter Advocacy, 23 August 2018: enate to Consider Defense Spending Appropriations

President Donald Trump signed the FY 2019 John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) into law Monday, Aug. 13, in a ceremony at Fort Drum, N.Y. Attention regarding defense policy and spending now turns to the completion of the defense appropriations legislation, which will fund the policy directives and authorizations included in the FY 2019 NDAA.

The two defense bills directly complement each other in the congressional budget and spending process, as the FY 2019 NDAA must be funded through the appropriations

process under a separate appropriations bill. That part of the process is still ongoing.

As we saw this year with the earliest signing of the NDAA in decades, the defense appropriations process also is moving forward at a much more rapid pace than normal. Congressional leadership has stated they aim to have the final legislation approved and signed into law by the president before the Oct. 1 start of the new fiscal year.

State of play

The Senate, after a short recess, returned to session this past week to continue work on their version of the defense appropriations legislation, sponsored by Sen. Richard Shelby (R-Ala.), chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee. Shelby also serves as the chair of the Senate Defense Appropriations Committee.

The legislation, similar to other Senate appropriations bills this year, has been packaged into a combined "minibus" \$856.9 billion spending package (H.R. 6157), which now includes labor, health and human services, and education and related agencies (S. 3158) as well as defense (S. 3159) - the two largest annual appropriations bills. The defense portion of Senate bill accounts for \$674.9 billion.

Introducing the legislation on the Senate floor this past week, Shelby stated, "The package before the Senate makes essential investments to accelerate the rebuilding of America's military and provides our men and women in uniform with the largest pay increase they have seen in nearly a decade."

He also said, "The fiscal year 2018 defense appropriations bill enacted earlier this year contained the largest increase in military spending in 15 years. ... The bill now before the Senate provides an additional \$16 billion above the fiscal year 2018 level. ... This funding sustains U.S. force structure and improves military readiness."

What's next

This week, the Senate will continue to consider amendments to the appropriations legislation introduced by other members of the Senate. Once this is complete, Senate leadership will bring the bill up for a final vote.

Once passed, the Senate bill will be reconciled with the House version of the appropriations legislation in conference, before heading to the president for his signature.

Look out for future updates as Congress moves to close out final action on the FY 2019 defense appropriations legislation before the start of the new fiscal year.

The August recess is an excellent opportunity for you to engage with your elected representatives, who are back in their home states holding town hall meetings and campaigning for the upcoming 2018 midterm elections. Please thank them for their support of the FY 2019 NDAA and ask them for their continued support for the full funding of the FY 2019 NDAA in the final FY 2019 defense appropriations bill.

Should the GI Bill Pay for Flight Training?

Boeing recently estimated that 635,000 new pilots will need to enter the workforce around the world over the next 20 years to fly all the planes being built and replace the thousands of pilots expected to retire in the near future. If fewer students attend flight schools, the commercial airline industry drain on military pilots likely will become even more severe.

The Air Force asserts it is currently 2,000 pilots short. It's easy to see why. After only two years of working for a commercial airline, a pilot can earn more than \$100,000 a year with about 15 days off per month. This is an attractive option compared to the military - even before considering some carriers are offering \$45,000 signing bonuses for experienced pilots and \$80,000 retention bonuses.

Some in Congress say paying for flight training for student veterans makes the Post-9/11 GI Bill unsustainable. Last month, the House of Representatives passed a bill that would

essentially limit the ability for veterans using the GI Bill for flight training.

Currently, the Post-9/11 GI Bill guidelines for flight school listed on VA's website allow for a:

- * Degree program that consists of flight training at a public institution of higher education, you can be reimbursed up to the public school in-state cost of the training and receive a monthly housing allowance and books-and-supplies stipend.
- * Degree program that consists of flight training at a private institution of higher education, you can be reimbursed up to the full cost of the training or the national maximum (currently \$19,198.31) per academic year, whichever is less. You may also receive a monthly housing allowance and books-and-supplies stipend.

Given these restrictions, student veterans who attend private institutions such as Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University are forced to take out student loans to pay the remainder of their flight school training cost themselves, sometimes to the tune of \$50,000 or more.

The House-passed bill would limit the amount payable to public school flight training programs to the same level as private institutions - \$19,193.31.

The bill was opposed by airline industry groups who pointed out "the VA's own analysis indicates that this change would dissuade virtually all veterans" from attending flight training while using the GI bill. VA estimates that 1,700 individuals are using their GI Bill benefits for flight training. Airline industry groups also stated that driving veterans away from flight school "is particularly concerning in the face of an acute and growing nationwide pilot shortage, which has already caused commercial air service cuts across the country."

Hardships Guard and Reserve Families Face Demand Further Study

National Guard and Reserve units are experiencing a high operational tempo, at home and abroad, and this toll is felt not only by the service members but also their support networks.

Sadly, very little research exists today on the well-being of these Guard and Reserve families. Most studies place the focus on active duty families. And when Guard and reserve families are part of the sample, it is often at a very small percentage.

It was evident at the Military Child Education Coalition National Training Seminar last month that reserve component families and their children have unique experiences and issues, such as being identified as a military student while their parent is activated. However, because of a lack of data, it's hard to determine what the best actions moving forward are to soften the negative impacts that affect Guard and Reserve families.

Empirical data is crucial when proposing legislation to help this population of military families. Lawmakers want to see proof that there is a need for change and, without data, the proof is only anecdotal. MOAA calls on Congress to conduct an assessment and report on the well-being of Guard and Reserve families.

No matter if the servicemember is deployed 2,000 miles away or 200 miles away, their families feel the logistical, financial, and emotional impact of their absence.

Logistical Impact

Being activated for Guard or Reserve duty can be a logistical nightmare. When on active duty orders, servicemember benefits change such as where they receive healthcare and price of their medical cost shares. Switching benefits can be confusing to understand especially when preparing to leave your family for a deployment or state mission.

Additionally, Guard and Reserve servicemembers do not have the same access to childcare benefits active duty personnel have. This makes it difficult for a Guard or Reserve family to transition from a two-parent household to essentially a single-parent household. When the servicemember is gone on duty, they must reassess childcare plans which sometimes involves their spouse leaving their job or cutting back hours at work.

Financial Impact

[Recent reports](#) suggest Guardsmen, specifically activated for state mission in Hawaii are experiencing a delay in pay. Due to the process of "after the fact pay system", where Guard and Reserve members are paid only after the service, many are going weeks without pay which has a huge impact on their family budget and ability to pay bills. Additionally, those eligible for higher housing allowances are experiencing delays in receiving this extra compensation due to administrative inefficiencies.

In addition to pay delays, Guard and Reserve families may have additional expenses related to some of the logistical issues mentioned above such as childcare.

Emotional Impact

Whether the servicemember is active duty, National Guard, or Reserve, being deployed overseas or on state active duty is extremely stressful on the family. Studies, [such as Rand's 2016 study on impact of deployments](#), suggest that although deployments don't have a significant impact on long term psychological and behavior health of families, the short term impact on families can definitely be felt socially and emotionally. With servicemembers facing dangers from combat zones to wildfires, it is no wonder stress levels for families during this time increase.

MOAA continues to identify and address issues surrounding the Guard and Reserve population. We continue to be an active voice, uplifting the concerns of National Guard and Reserve families through support of efforts to:

- * Collect more data on Guard and Reserve families
- * Encourage more states to use Military Student Identifiers for Guard and Reserve children in schools and disaggregate data from their active duty student counterparts to address more specific issues
- * Ensure employers are prepared for employing a Guardsman/Reservists so servicemembers can keep their job after extended duty periods
- * Include Guard and Reserve language in appropriate legislation focused on active duty, but could benefit all components
- * Educate Guard and Reserve families on their military benefits and how they change based on activation status
- * Expand access to military benefits to Guard and Reserve families

**Worry is like a rocking chair.
It gives you something to do but doesn't get you anywhere.**



JAYHAWK CHAPTER MOAA



A membership meeting will be held **Tuesday, 18 September 2018**
at Lawrence Country Club

Dinner cost is \$24.00/meal.

The Program: Our speaker will be a student from Haskell University who will talk on his/her tribal culture and the student perspective of what Haskell offers the young Native American today

Social Hour: 1800 hours Dinner: 1840 hours

The Menu: Rustic rolls with olive oil and Parmesan, Fall salad, Chicken Piccata, brown rice, seasonal vegetables, Chef's choice dessert

Send your reservation and check payable to Jayhawk Chapter MOAA
to arrive no later than Wednesday, **12 September** to:
CAPT Jim Cooper, **5216 Brown Lane, Lawrence, KS 66049-5112**

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, 5216 Brown Lane, Lawrence, KS 66049-5112

MOAA WEBSITE: www.moaa.org
KANSAS COUNCIL WEBSITE: www.kansasmooa.net
JAYHAWK CHAPTER WEBSITE:
www.jayhawkmoaa.org

*If you can receive this by
e-mail, please let us know.
Printing and postage costs
the Chapter close to \$3 for
each copy we have to mail.*

Tentative 2018 Meeting Schedule:
Tuesday 18 September

Tuesday 13 November

2018 Kansas Council of Chapters Dates/Locations:

27 October Kaw Valley Chapter, Topeka

ENJOY LABOR DAY!!!



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