



Jayhawk Chapter



MOAA Newsletter

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

Inside this issue

May Program	1
President's Message	2
Jayhawk Chapter News	3
Army ROTC	3-4
Navy ROTC	5
Air Force ROTC	6
MOAA News	7-8
Meal/Dues Payment Form	9

May Program

Time: Tuesday 17 May 2022

Lawrence Country Club

6:00 PM Cocktails/Social Hour

7:00 PM Dinner

Speaker-

TBD

DUES

Dues for 2022 were due 1 January 2022 in the amount of \$20.

If you have not already done so, please send your check to:

*Jim Cooper, 5216 Brown Lane,
Lawrence, KS 66049-5112*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ CHAPTER awarded in:

2002 / 2003 / 2005 / 2008 / 2009 / 2010 / 2011 / 2012 /
2013 / 2014 / 2016 / 2017 / 2018 / 2021

★ ★ ★ ★ CHAPTER awarded in:

2004 / 2006 / 2007 / 2015 / 2019

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President's Comments

Spring is here and we've enjoyed seasonal weather with plenty of rain—good news for our plants and gardens. Elsewhere in the newsletter I've reviewed the legislative advocacy news—please let me know of public policy issues you think our chapter and MOAA should support here in Kansas and nationwide.



May is our month to honor graduates and commission new officers. Ed Phillips and Jim Cooper have already attended the KU Naval ROTC annual awards ceremony and presented on behalf of MOAA. They were both impressed by the large number of organizations offering awards to the midshipmen. We're not the only ones with deep appreciation for young women and men answering the call of service to defend our nation. I will attend the Air Force awards on May 4th and George Pogge will represent at the Army awards ceremony on May 6th. For reasons that remain unclear Jim Cooper was invited to present the MOAA award at the Kansas State Air Force ROTC formal dinner. I accepted the invitation and presented the MOAA award at their event. Interestingly, Kansas State ROTC this year has their first Space Force Guardian officer to be commissioned.

I met with Lt Col Charlie Dorssum the Detachment Commander for Air Force and Space Force ROTC at KU. Air Force will be gaining nine new 2d Lieutenants from Detachment 280. I was honored to be asked to provide remarks at an Air Force pre-commissioning event at the KU Union on May 16th.

Our chapter dinner will be at our usual venue, Lawrence Country Club, on Tuesday May 17th with social hour beginning at 6 pm. I hope you can attend. Please RSVP to Jim Cooper.

May is also the date for Armed Force Day on May 21st and Memorial Day on May 30th. If you are wishing to help with our cemetery flag honors for Memorial Day weekend please let me know. I'll be making an announcement at the dinner meeting.

As always, if you need assistance with a problem or have any MOAA-related concern feel free to reach out to me at 785 424-7527. I'll be happy to assist.

Thanks, Mike Kelly



Jayhawk Chapter News

PERSONAL NEWS

From Alan VanLoenen:

(1) American Legion Post 14 bingo every Wednesday and Saturday at 3408 West 6th Street, Lawrence, KS. Doors open at 4:30 PM, bingo session starts at 6:45 PM.

(2) American Legion Post 14 coffee and conversation for U.S. military veterans every Tuesday and Thursday at 9AM to 12 PM. 3408 West 6th Street, Lawrence, KS.



Army News

Sunny spring greetings from the mighty Jayhawk Battalion! I'm tapping this note while simultaneously rubbing my calves; this morning, the cadets and cadre rocketed up the "KU 1000" – 1000 stairs spread over four miles of Mt. Oread (if you were on campus and saw mysterious chalk markings near stairwells, that's what you were seeing). Since the last update (and through this morning), the Jayhawks have kept the throttle to the floor. In March, we executed one of the largest Combined Spring Field Training Exercises (FTX) in all of Cadet Command this academic year with a total of seven host programs (and 14 total universities) closing on Fort Riley for 96 hours of fantastic Army training. While chilly, these year's Spring FTX was blessedly dry and the cadets had a fantastic time performing in platoon leadership positions. We then quickly reset and conducted the Ranger Buddy Competition (RBC).

Teams from 41 universities across the country converged on the cold, but bright fields of Sesquicentennial Point (near the Mutt Run in Lawrence) to participate in the grueling RBC on 9 April. We had teams from as far afield as Rhode Island and Arizona participate in this year's edition (the 26th since the Jayhawks started it in 1995). The competition began with a 15km (9.3

mile) march while carrying a 35lb ruck that traversed some very muddy and VERY root-riddled Clinton Lake trails. Teams then navigated more than a dozen skills lanes including assembly and disassembly of weapons, first aid, map reading, calling for fire, calling a 9-line, and employing claymores and hand grenades. To finish, they had to run a 5km (3.1mile) race, then complete a devilish final “mystery event”: 50 deadlifts of 160lbs per male cadet and 25 deadlifts of 160lbs per female cadet. 1st and 2nd place in the men’s division was won by KU (CDT Guyot/CDT Kularatne – first, CDT Patterson/CDT Constable – second) and KU’s co-ed team came in second place (CDT Warburton/CDT Grimes), and KU’s top finishing women’s team finished just off the podium in fourth place (CDT Mikkelson/CDT Pal). This year, the event and the awards ceremony were attended by the recently retired Sergeant Major of the Army Dan Dailey. KU performed fantastically in the event and we were stoked to host a marine team from KU’s Naval ROTC. While we shed both blood and tears in the planning and execution of RBC, we very apparently did not shed enough as the Jayhawk cadets were back at it the very next week with a blood drive!

Our Scabbard and Blade Army ROTC Honor Society put together a blood drive and we filled every bag the Red Cross brought along. Cadets from both KU Naval ROTC and KU AF ROTC also donated to the cause. The lack of blood coursing through our collective veins made the following week’s Army Combat Fitness Test (ACFT) that much more challenging! As many of you probably saw in the news, but Army rolled out its latest version of the ACFT; the new version exchanges the “leg tuck” for the “plank” and comes with gender and age group scores. The Jayhawks were chomping at the bit to see how we would fare. All in all, the Jayhawks did well as a battalion. Running the test is still logistically challenging (as we have to transport about 4000lbs of kit from the Military Science Building to Lawrence High School), but the test gives us an accurate assessment of strengths and weaknesses within the battalion. Besides the ACFT, we also held two final training events prior to cadets departing for their summer training: land navigation for all juniors (at Fort Leavenworth) and the Confidence Obstacle Course (at Fort Riley). Success in land navigation was identified several years ago by a team of ORSAs as the most reliable predictor of success at Cadet Summer Training, so the Jayhawk Battalion spends a LOT of time navigating the land. Training on the obstacle course was primarily focused on those cadets heading to Air Assault School (we have 5 going this summer).

Just like last year’s summer, the cadre and cadets will scatter to the four winds. Many cadets (and cadre) will head to Fort Knox for camp. Others will head to Fort Benning for Airborne School, Fort Campbell for Air Assault, and overseas for language training. Before we scatter, though, we will have a final awards ceremony / BBQ at Clinton Lake on Friday 06 May (from 1130 to 1400 at Pavilion #2) and our Joint Commissioning at the Kansas Union Ballroom on 16 MAY (from 1030-1200). If you are in town and would like to stop by at either of these events, please do!

Rock Chalk!

LTC John D. Finch, Professor of Military Science



Navy News



Greetings from Jayhawk Battalion!

This semester we have had many events to allow our midshipmen to be challenged both physically and mentally. In early March, the battalion traveled to Boulder, CO to compete in the Drill Meet held by the University of Colorado. Our shooting teams did very well, with our pistol team placing first and our rifle team placing second. Midshipmen also competed in the platoon drill, squad drill, and color guard competitions. Our platoon and squad teams placed third and second, respectively. The Jayhawk Battalion also participated in the Endurance Race and Knowledge Team competition and, while they did not place, they enjoyed themselves nonetheless.

Six midshipmen also participated in the Ranger Buddy Challenge, organized by the KU Army



ROTC unit. They were required to perform various activities such as a foot march, weapon familiarity and tactics, and simulated medical procedures in the field. Additionally, our unit hosted a Spring Field Exercise (FEX) where our Marine-option midshipmen hosted others from the University of Nebraska and Iowa State Univ. At the FEX, these midshipmen trained on our obstacle course, conducted land navigation in day and night conditions, small unit leadership exercises, and a nine mile hike with rucksacks.

Our spring semester activities challenged the students while also building teamwork, camaraderie, and morale. One example is our Leadership Reaction Course where midshipmen overcame obstacles as a team. Midshipmen participated in three exercises: a field casualty evacuation exercise, carrying an ammo can through the obstacle course, and a minefield to tug-of-war station. It was a fun way for the battalion to learn about the importance of effective leadership, communication, and trust within the team. Even the active duty staff got involved and beat the seniors in tug-of-war!

This month we have eight seniors commissioning: MIDN House, MIDN Gardner, MIDN Devany, MIDN Gurnett, MIDN Hussong, MIDN Krajicek, OC Kleehammer, and OC Allin. They have all worked hard in their final semester and are nearing the finish line. Bravo Zulu seniors!

I am extremely proud of the effort all the midshipmen have put in this semester and I look forward to finishing strong.

Rock Chalk and Fly Navy!
CAPT James "Nemo" Miller



Air Force News

Hello from Detachment 280, the Flying Jayhawks!

The halls of the Military Science Building are filled with anxiety and anticipation as we wrap up the academic year and nine great Americans prepare to graduate and then commission into the active duty Air Force. Individual service commissioning as well as our joint commissioning both take place the morning of 16 May.

We've been busy in the meantime with regular spring coursework and fieldwork, and preparing eight of our cadets for Field Training this summer at Maxwell AFB, AL. Each cadet will attend one of five two-week intensive training iterations designed to prepare them to become members of our detachment's Professional Officer Course. I know they're ready for it and I look forward to seeing their continued growth as officer candidates. I too will get the pleasure of enjoying roughly 50 days of my summer while acting as Field Training Force Support and Communications Squadron CC. If you know anything about FSS or Comm let me know!

As expected, we lost a handful of our AS200 (sophomores) cadets as a result of the FY22 Professional Officer Course Selection Process board. Hopefully we'll see a couple of those cadets back in the fall to make another run at it, but for those not returning, we certainly wish them the best and thank them for their commitment to our program.

Finally, the warmer weather has allowed for a more favorable outdoor training environment, and we've taken advantage of it. We held Leadership Lab on the West Campus fields three consecutive weeks in April (see photo) as the detachment honed its small team tactics, communication, force protection, and weapons skills. We even got an intense game of "capture the flag" in for good measure.

Rock Chalk National Champs!

Lt Col Charlie Dorssom, Commander, Air Force ROTC Det 280

(Field Leadership Exercise, 6 Apr 22)



MOAA LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

This is a summary of the many items MOAA produces each week on legislative activities.

Those who are MOAA National members receive the full Legislative Updates each week. Let us know if you want additional info on any particular topic: job4mike6@aol.com

Legislative Advocacy Update

Our MOAA Kansas Council of Chapters divides our work on legislation by federal and state bodies. MOAA national staff and the MOAA Nation Board of Directors select federal legislation action items. In Kansas RADM Ed Phillips (USN, retired) is our federal advocacy lead. The three issues this year for MOAA's federal focus are 1) 4.6% pay raise for active duty and reserve component troops, 2) Stopping TRICARE Co-Pay Overpay, and 3) Concurrent Receipt of disability compensation and retired pay for those medically retired with less than 20 years active duty service. The bill for concurrent receipt is the Major Richard Star Act, S. 344. Please invest a few stamps and send in the post cards attached to your MOAA magazine to show your personal support for these priorities.

On April 19th, Jim Cooper and I met in Topeka with Tyler Mason of Senator Marshall's staff and discussed the federal legislative priorities of MOAA. MOAA has an ongoing annual national campaign plan to contact every legislator. Jayhawk Chapter, as we did last year, engaged with the Senator's professional staff. Mr. Mason is former Army and works military-related issues for Senator Marshall. He was open to our input and is open to future feedback from our chapter. Other Kansas MOAA chapters contacted Senator Moran and our state's four Congressional representatives. Although Senator Moran is ranking member of Senate Veterans Affairs, no Kansan is seated on House Armed Services or Senate Armed Services Committees. Kansas has three major military installations and should be represented on Armed Services. We hope this lack of representation changes in the next Congress.

For state-level issues MOAA works with other veterans advocacy groups like the VFW and Paralyzed Veterans of America to list our priorities. We then pursue these priorities with the state legislators. Last year our number one priority was the approval of a plan to construct a new skilled nursing facility for elderly veterans in northeast Kansas. The legislators approved this request and ordered the Kansas Commission on Veterans Affairs (KCVA) Office to apply for federal funds from the VA which will pay for 65% of the construction costs. New legislative action this year increased the bonding authority for the 35% of construction expenses under Kansas responsibility to \$17.2 million. Site selection work is under way and the KCVA's site selection may be announced later this year. This is a big win, especially for those of us that live in northeast Kansas because the state's two existing veterans facilities are west near Dodge City and south-central near Winfield. Four of the five most populous counties in the state are in the northeast so construction of a state skilled level nursing facility will enable more visits from close by family members.

This year the number one priority for veterans advocates was elimination of the state's 6.5% sales tax on food. I testified before the House Taxation Committee on a bill which would step

down the tax by two per cent every year until the tax on food purchases was eliminated. This phase out approach was voted for approval in the last week of April and the Governor reportedly made a public statement that she would sign this tax decrease into law although she wanted the tax promptly cut to zero this year. One point of contention in the debate on this issue was whether to include prepared foods in the tax cut. The current bill retains the 6.5% state tax on prepared foods, such as restaurant meals. Locally imposed taxes on food sales remain in effect under this legislation.

There were other bills with impact to the veteran community passed this year. License plates for autos and smaller trucks will include Silver Star and Bronze Star plates for those awarded those decorations. The policy for disabled veteran plates will be changed. If you want a wheelchair symbol on your disabled veteran plate you will need to be approved for your disability by a physician on the Kansas Form TR-159. This is the same form and same criteria used for all citizens of Kansas seeking the handicapped placard or plate. Disabled veteran plates without a wheelchair symbol require a 50% or higher VA disability rating and permit free parking at parking meters without feeding the meter. The \$30 license plate fee for cars (and higher costs for truck plates) is waived for the disabled veterans plate. I represented MOAA and testified on the license plate bill before the House Transportation Committee.

Legislators designated new sections of highways and bridges to memorialize fallen troops and civilian public safety officers at various locations. The cost to erect signs appropriated for these memorials this year is \$31,000.

Kansas is part of the nationwide plan to designate and operate a new suicide prevention hotline. 988 will become the new phone number to call in such a crisis no later than July 16, 2022. Kansas legislators appropriated \$10 million to set up and operate the 988 suicide prevention hotline for our state. Until 988 is in operation the existing number is 1-800-273-8255.

Legislators approved placement of a new Gold Star Memorial on the State House grounds. A motion in the House Appropriations Committee to add \$100,000 in state funds to this effort may or may not survive veto scrutiny from the Governor. The original legislative plan for this memorial was private funding from donors.

Disabled veterans rated at 100% (permanent and total) can claim an additional personal exemption on their Kansas income tax next year. This is a tax cut of almost \$130 for these severely disabled veterans.

The Legislature is awaiting the Governor's decisions to sign or veto all legislation passed this session and is now in recess until Monday, May 23rd. At which time the legislature will consider motions to override any vetoes and then adjourn until January 2023. Please communicate with me on any state legislative topics we need to address with our fellow veteran advocacy organizations in readiness for next year. I will take any suggestions for federal legislation and pass those along to RADM (ret) Phillips. Advocacy is one of our main purposes in MOAA and we need your battle-tested wisdom of experience and ongoing input to be most effective.



JAYHAWK CHAPTER MOAA



A membership meeting will be held **Tuesday, 17 May 2022**

at the **Lawrence Country Club**

Dinner cost is \$30.00/meal.

The Program: Our program will be an Army University speaker

Social Hour: 1800 hours Dinner: 1900 hours

The Menu: Citrus salad, pistachio-crusted salmon with cilantro rice and asparagus, mousse

Send your reservation and check payable to Jayhawk Chapter MOAA to arrive no later than **Wednesday, 11 May** 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 \$30.00 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)

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KANSAS COUNCIL WEBSITE: www.kansasmooa.net
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