



Heart of Texas Chapter
Military Officer Association of America
P.O. Box 23964 Waco, TX 76702-3964

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June 2018

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Hot, hot, hot!

The heat ramped up in May and has continued for June, and despite over 3 inches of rain in May, we sure do need more rain. Judiciously water: best times are before the sun rises to about 0900; after 0900, evaporation outpaces absorption in our lawns. And remember to specifically water trees and bushes, since lawn sprinklers oftentimes do not provide the necessary amounts of moisture to tree roots.

With the success of our scholarship fundraiser, attention is now focused on the scholarship screening process. I served on the screening committee last year, and I'll confirm the task is great and requires much focus. We received at least 23 applications, and our application packages are thorough and comprehensive. Our process is not a simple "prize drawing", but involves reading essays and questionnaires applicants submitted. I want to give a big salute to Harold Rafuse who assembles the screening committee and has built the scoring process over the years that considers each applicant fairly. The task is daunting and we want to ensure the selected scholarship recipients meet the spirit and share the values we adhere to in MOAA. Thank you to each member of the scholarship committee!

Despite what the media reports, bills are being worked in Congress and the President is signing new legislation. The Military Officers Association of America reports on the success of MOAA backed legislative proposals. The House and Senate are currently working the National Defense Authorization Act and key MOAA goals include increased end strength levels, basic pay increases, defined protections for service members from domestic violence and other violent crimes, no increase to TRICARE fees, protection of basic allowance for housing, aid for severely disabled military children, and modernization of the Defense Officer Personnel Management Act. Of interest to

veterans, Congress passed a bill to streamline the VA health care system, which could reduce veterans' wait times and allow more of them to seek out their own physicians. If you do not subscribe to MOAA's weekly updates, you can sign up by going to the MOAA website.

With regret, I report the passing of Libby Rochelle. When reading Libby's obituary, I was struck by the account of an amazing woman, wife, and mother living a life of adventure with her husband for over 40 years. I along with many of you will miss Libby. Although inevitable, life endings are sad occurrences, but lives such as Libby's can continue to shine in our hearts and memories. At times such as these, we can renew our chapter relationships with one another and remember why we join together for common goals and beliefs. Thank you for serving and continuing to serve.

Respectfully,
Dennis DeGraff

PROPOSED SCHEDULE FOR 2018 - 2019

19 July, Thursday Dinner Meeting, RCC, proposed educational scholarship awards or guest speaker.
16 August, Thursday Dinner Meeting, RCC, guest speaker or entertainment to be announced.
20 September, Thursday Dinner Meeting, RCC, guest speaker or entertainment to be announced
18 October, Thursday Dinner Meeting, RCC, guest speaker or entertainment to be announced
15 November, Thursday Dinner Meeting, RCC, guest speaker or entertainment to be announced
13 December, Thursday Dinner Meeting, RCC, entertainment by the band, The Morticians
2019 Dinner Meetings to be the 3rd Thursday except for May.
10 May 2019, Friday Afternoon, Annual Scholarship Fundraiser Golf tournament
Ridgewood Country Club is at 7301 Fish Pond Rd.

Upcoming Events and Information Items

JUNE 21ST THURSDAY DINNER MEETING

AT RIDGEWOOD BANQUET ROOM

GUEST SPEAKER, BOB LULL WITH
PRESENTATION ON GENERAL RANALD
MACKENZIE, CIVIL WAR PRODIGY,
COMMANDER 4TH CALVARY AND
INVOLVED WITH INDIAN WARS

**SOCIAL HOUR: 6:00 P.M. **, **CALL TO
TABLES 6:30 P.M. *, *INTRO &
ANNOUNCEMENTS , 6:35 P.M. **, **DINNER
6:55 P.M.**, **DRAWING & GUEST
SPEAKER 7:55 P.M.

MENU: Caesar Salad with crisp romaine hearts, brioche croutons, grated parmesan cheese and club made dressing, Pork Loin and Catfish, Chef's choice of starch, vegetable and two desserts, Fresh Rolls and Butter, Fresh Brewed Iced Tea or Hot Tea and Coffee. \$30 per person, payable at registration table, cash or check made to HOT Chapter MOAA. Please call Vince Tobola, 772-5251 or e-mail vtobola@aol.com, NLT Tuesday 19 June, 6:00 p.m. for sign-ups.

After this time, please contact as soon as possible if plans change and desire to attend and we will work to accommodate you at the dinner meeting.

NOTE: The summer dress code is effect with gentlemen attire as collared shirts and slacks, with coat and/or tie optional and ladies' attire as they prefer.

2018 CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP DUES The Board is always looking for prospects to join the chapter. Please contact Vince Tobola, vtobola@aol.com or call 709-5795 cell if you need an application form or a chapter introduction letter or have questions. Chapter member dues are \$25 and due starting January 1st. These can be paid at the dinner meeting or mailed to the PO Box address on first page of newsletter. Thank you for your ongoing support.

HOT CHAPTER BOARD MEETING

The monthly Board meeting will be held on Tuesday, **June 26, 2018**, 5 p.m., at the Waco Cottonwood Creek Golf Course Clubhouse.

JUNE SPECIAL DAY RECOGNITION

Birthdays: Charles "Doc" Anderson, Stan Brubaker, Dennis DeGraff, Markham Dossett, Nancy Eldridge, Sarah Preddy, Wayne Purselley, Sally Robinson, Margaret Ross, Susie Rowe, DeLisa Russell, Billie Sawyer, and Don Schreiber

Anniversaries: Pike and Marcia Anderson, Charles and Patsy Norman Farr, Jim and Kay Gompper, Fred and Nancy Logan, Bill and Gerry Milnor, Kent and Marcia Rindy, and Robert and Margaret Ross.

Congratulations & best wishes to all on your special day.

WACO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The HOT Chapter is a member of the Greater Waco Chamber of Commerce so chapter members can attend chamber events. The Chamber is located in downtown Waco at 101 S. 3rd Street (254 757-5600).

- **Wed., June 20**, 1000 Friends of Waco Monthly Roundtable, 10:30 – 11:30 a.m., Waco Hippodrome, 724 Austin Avenue. .
- **Wed., June 27**, Business Power Hour: Mental Health in the Workplace at Greater Waco Chamber of Commerce. Lunch will be provided. Door opens at 11:45 a.m. and the event runs from 12 noon – 1 p.m. Please RSVP at web site or by calling 757-5600.

MCLENNAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE RIVERSOUNDS CONCERT SERIES

Music events are held at the Bosque River Stage. Admission is free for all events. Gates open at 7 p.m.

- Thursday, June 14th, Rotel and the Hot Tomatoes – Incredible show band of three presenting the music of the '70's and '80's.
- Thursday, June 21st, Matchmaker – Performing the music of Motown.
- Thursday, June 28 – Derek Spence, tribute to the music of George Strait.

FOURTH ON THE BRAZOS (WED, JULY 4TH)

The annual Fourth on the Brazos riverfront event will take place at Touchdown Alley next to McLane Stadium. Admission is free due to sponsors, HEB and City of Waco. Fireworks will begin around 9:15 p.m. Gates open at 5 p.m., Zac Harmon Blues Band at 6 p.m., Desperado: Eagles Tribute band at 7:30 p.m. and Waco Community Band at 9 p.m.

PRESIDENT SIGNS HISTORIC LEGISLATION TO IMPROVE VETERANS HEALTH CARE

President Trump has signed the *VA MISSION Act of 2018*. “The VA MISSION Act will help improve the care our veterans get at the VA while leveraging the capabilities of the private sector when needed. It will help recruit the best talent at the VA, which is what our veterans deserve, and it also extends caregiver benefits to every veteran who needs it,” said Keith Harman, national commander of the 1.7-million member VFW and its Auxiliary. The VA MISSION Act was the result of a bipartisan and bicameral effort led by Senate Committee on Veterans’ Affairs Chairman Sen. Johnny Isakson, Ranking Member Sen. Jon Tester and House Committee on Veterans’ Affairs Chairman Rep. Phil Roe, M.D.

Some of the major provisions in the act include:

- expanding the VA's comprehensive caregiver support program to pre-9/11 veterans, providing eligible caregivers additional support services and a monthly stipend;
- eliminating the broken Choice program and establishes one community care program called the Veterans Community Care Program;
- allowing veterans and their doctors to choose the best option on where to get health care whether in the VA or from one of the providers in the VA's community care network;
- streamlining eligibility standards so veterans have greater choice, doing away with the former distance and wait-time restrictions;
- investing in the VA's workforce to attract and retain high-quality health care providers;
- expanding access to telehealth care closer to home;
- establishing mobile deployment teams to help provide additional care to the VA facilities with the highest need;
- recruiting medical scribes to help physicians focus on serving veterans, rather than spending time on paperwork;
- establishing a walk-in care benefit in the community for veterans in need of non-emergency care;
- establishing a commission to review and recommend realigning of resources to strengthen and modernize the VA medical infrastructure to address the needs of the changing veteran population.

VA FUNDS EFFORTS TO REDUCE INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

VA has committed to adding \$17 million in spending to strengthen the Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) Assistance Program across the nation. Research shows that IPV, which is physical, sexual or psychological harm by a current or former partner, may be a greater risk for veterans than for non-veterans. The current program is a holistic approach that includes understanding, recognizing and responding to the effects of trauma with the goal to prevent further violence and promote healthy relationships. The program was established in 2014 and offers intervention through VA and community partners to address housing, education and employment needs. The increase in funding will expand the program from 115 facilities to all VA medical centers, and help to increase awareness of IPV as a serious issue within the veteran community.

WHITE HOUSE APPROVES INTERAGENCY PLAN ON SUICIDE PREVENTIONS

President Donald Trump recently approved an interagency plan to implement an executive order offering support to veterans with mental health care and suicide prevention resources for one year during their transition from military to civilian life. VA, DOD, and the Department of Homeland Security were required to develop the plan by an executive order signed by President Trump in January, which directed the agencies to collaborate in efforts to reduce the rate of suicide among recently discharged veterans. Research has shown that veterans are at a higher risk of suicide and mental health crisis during the first year of their transition to civilian life.

D-DAY COMMEMORATION

On Wednesday, June 6 at 11 a.m., the Friends of the National World War II Memorial hosted a ceremony at the World War II Memorial in Washington D.C., to recognize the service of the some 160,000 Allied troops that landed on the beaches of France 74 years ago. In attendance were approximately 10 D-Day and WWII veterans who placed wreaths to honor the sacrifice of the 9,000 soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines who were killed during the invasion.

JUNE 12TH WOMEN VETERANS DAY

This date commemorates the 70th anniversary of the Women’s Armed Services Integration Act signed into law by President Harry S. Truman on June 12, 1948.

TEXAS COUNCIL OF CHAPTERS MOAA

The Texas Council of Chapters (TCC) is an affiliate of the Military Officers Association of America. It is intended to represent the thousands of active duty, retired Guard and Reserve military and other former members of the uniformed services and their families and survivors, who hail from this great state.

MOAA is a nonprofit veterans association dedicated to maintaining a strong national defense and ensuring our nation keeps its commitments to currently, retired, and former members of the uniformed services and their families and survivors. Membership is open to those who hold or have ever held a warrant or commission in any component of the Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard, Public Health Service or National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and their surviving spouses. Through MOAA's benefits, membership provides access to advice, money-saving products and services, and a team of legislative professionals fighting for your rights. By also joining the local chapter, there are regular meetings and social functions that result in lasting friendships & pursuit of common goals.

MOAA's key mission is advocacy. MOAA personifies the power of advocacy. Our voice has been heard; it continues to be heard both at the State and Congressional levels. By leveraging the promises and commitments that have been made to those who have been faithful to their country, MOAA has held our nation's leaders accountable in living up to those commitments. In the current environment, where benefits are continually threatened, MOAA has, forcefully and powerfully, articulated positions on issues. Simply stated, MOAA job is to guard your benefits and force Congress to keep the nation's commitment to those who sacrifice for our nation's freedom. MOAA gets the job done!

The Texas Council of Chapters acts as the representative of its member Chapters, their membership; non-affiliated Chapters and their membership; and National MOAA members who are not affiliated with a Chapter but reside in Texas to the Texas Coalition, the Texas Legislature and various other organizations within the State of Texas. It is the role of the Texas Council, as well, to advocate for the benefits, welfare and pay of those represented to our Senators and Representatives in the US Congress

and the same in the Texas Legislature. This is done regardless of political parties; MOAA is strictly apolitical! MOAA National's mission is Congressional advocacy; the State Council's mission is both Congressional advocacy and advocacy is the State Legislature. Join us in our effort; you can make a difference!

At present, the Texas legislature does not formally meet in session until 2019. However, various committees still continue to meet on a regular basis and TCC members are involved at times to provide information at meetings on veteran issues. In preparation for the coming 2019 session, TCC planning has started on one possible veteran issue to advocate. This involves trying for property tax relief with deduction based on a veteran's VA disability percentage. A modified proposal was pushed in 2017 session to gain this for 80 and 90 percent disabled veterans but it did not proceed in legislation for a vote. Efforts will continue to try again but takes much coordination and active support in the busy and bill-packed Texas session process.

TEXAS VETERANS COMMISSION

The mission of the Texas Veterans Commission is to advocate for and provide superior service to veterans that will significantly improve the quality of life for all Texas veterans, their families, and survivors. The web site is www.tvc.texas.gov

The Texas Veterans Portal connects veterans, their families, and caregivers to the benefits and services through their military service. It covers areas as employment & career, housing & loans, licenses & permits, records & medals, dependents & caregivers, legal & financial, disabilities & claims, women veterans and state agencies. The web site is <https://veterans.portal.texas.gov>. There also is a veterans crisis line at 1-800-273-8255 for assistance.

KOREAN WAR REMEMBRANCE

The Korean War began 68 years ago in June and the shooting stopped 65 years ago in July. While an armistice was signed July 27, 1953, the war did not end and that remains true to this day. On average, about 30,000 U.S. troops serve in South Korea each year and U.S. troops would immediately be on the front lines in case of conflict.

The creation of the Korean War Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. remembers the sacrifices made during the conflict. It was dedicated in 1995. Approximately 1.5 million U.S. veterans served in the Korean War and 36,576 died there.

GUEST SPEAKER – BOB LULL

Bob Lull is a retired U.S. Army lieutenant colonel, with more than twenty-two years of active service. His military career included responsibilities as a platoon leader, company commander, battalion commander, and numerous staff positions. He served two years in Vietnam, one in Korea, four years in Germany, three years on the staff of the US Military Academy at West Point, brief assignments in Ecuador, Panama, and various other locales. His other assignments include duties at Fort Bliss, Texas; Austin, and Atlanta. He has served in multiple assignments at Fort Sam Houston, in San Antonio.

After retiring from the Army, Bob embarked on a career in the healthcare field at the executive level in a number of hospitals, major teaching institutions, and as chief financial officer and managing partner in a healthcare support services consulting company. He was recognized for his accomplishments and designated as a Fellow in the American College of Healthcare Executives. After his years in healthcare, in 2007, he followed still another path teaching American History at McLennan Community College in Waco. He is the author of the award-winning book *Civil War General and Indian Fighter James M. Williams*.

Bob is a graduate of Trinity University, and holds advanced degrees from the University of Texas, Webster University, and the American Military University. He is also a graduate of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College.

Bob and his wife, Penny, have been married for fifty-three years. They have two sons and three granddaughters. Penny has recently retired as a teacher at St. Paul's Episcopal School, and Bob is working on a book about four brothers in Texas history named Baylor.

COLA WATCH

The April 2018 CPI is 244.607, 2.1 percent above the FY 2018 COLA baseline. The CPI for May 2018 is scheduled to be released on June 12. The Consumer Price Index is used to annually adjust pay for military and federal retirees, survivors, and Social Security recipients.

MEMORIAM FOR EIZABETH “LIBBY” ROCHELL

Elizabeth “Libby” A. Leggitt Rochell passed away Tuesday, May 29, 2018. The memorial service and interment were held on June 4 at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Waco, Texas.

Libby was born November 30, 1940, in Marshall, Michigan, to Samuel H. and Mildred Leggitt. Because of Libby's health issues, her father moved the family to San Marcos, Texas, when Libby was eight years old. She graduated from high school, Class of 1958, and then she attended Stephens Girl College, majoring in voice for one year. She then attended one year at Southwest Texas State University and graduated from TCU with a degree in nutrition. After a short stint as a manager of Hallsberg Cafeteria, she was accepted as a nutritionist with the Texas State Health Department long term care division. There she joined a team that inspected nursing homes until she retired.

Libby married Robert Rochell on February 18, 1978, and had just celebrated their 40th anniversary by having dinner in Honolulu, Hawaii, at Alan Wong Gourmet Restaurant. She loved to travel, having traveled to over 100 countries and islands. Her favorite place to visit was Bangkok, Thailand, that she visited four times, and where she loved to shop. Libby's favorite hobbies were traveling, gardening, and yes, she loved jewelry.

Also, she had many friends from various clubs around the country. She served on the Altar Guild at St. Paul's Episcopal Church for many years, and East Terrace, Historic Waco, and DAR. She was a member of the Honorable Order of Molly Pitcher. During the war with the British, Molly was the person carrying pitchers of water to cool the cannons and provide water for the soldiers. When her husband was killed, she took his place as the gunner. She was commissioned by George Washington for her heroism and bravery.

She was preceded in death by her parents.

She is survived by her husband, Robert Rochell; daughter, Tracy Webb and Mark Gilmore of San Marcos, and Pam and Yeager of McGregor; brothers, Hunter Leggitt and wife, DJ, of Chicago, and Buzz Leggitt of San Marcos; granddaughter, Brittany Kelley of Hewitt, Texas; and grandson, Graham Harvey of San Marcos.

Libby was determined, extremely strong-spirited and was well liked by everyone and was an inspiration to all. She defied all odds many times. Libby loved life!



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 MOAA Membership 1-800 245-8762

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