



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

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October 2018

**PRESIDENT'S COLUMN**

Pumpkins, Baseball(?), Oktoberfest!

I have mentioned before how much I love autumn and all the associated activities. After some fun afternoon dove hunts, especially with my son last week, I am now getting ready for an exciting Kansas pheasant hunt this month. Saturday college football only keeps the excitement level high, and of course the myriad state fairs with the pleasing aroma of all things fried. October also brings opportunities for each of us as military officers, and/or spouses of officers, to prepare for the future of our community, state, and nation.

First, let me encourage you to prepare for the elections coming in November, and register to vote if you have not yet. More importantly, read up on the candidates and issues that impact our lives as Americans. Often in mid-term elections, results hinge on the few that embrace the political discussion, and the rest of America sits back and watches. As defenders of the US Constitution, we sacrificed so that our constitutional republic could function as the founding fathers envisioned. Encourage others to examine the candidates running for office and to get out and vote, either in early voting later this month, or on election day, November 6th.

Second, remember the young bright eyed students we awarded scholarships to in July? Planning is beginning for next year's scholarship golf tournament and you are invited to participate. Our next scholarship golf tournament meeting will be held on October 10<sup>th</sup> at the Hewitt Summer Palace restaurant at 1200. I encourage you to come and enjoy lunch and add to the discussion as we plan for next year's event. Remember, the funds raised support and encourage local young people seeking to further their higher education, and from our scholarship recipient interviews, these folks are going to make a positive impact on our nation for years to come. You can have a direct hand

ensuring we prepare leaders for the future! Also, during our November dinner meeting, we will be awarding scholarship funds to Baylor AFROTC cadets who excelled during field training this last summer.

Third, the annual Vet's Fest lunch will be held on October 17<sup>th</sup> at the Outback Steakhouse from 1100-1300. Come out and enjoy a special lunch and help support veterans activities, specifically the Veterans Day Parade. Bring a friend and share stories and experiences with other veterans. And while I am discussing veterans, remember we are collecting basic toiletries and socks and personal items to give to the veterans who are resident patients in the Waco and Temple VA hospitals. If you'd like to make a monetary contribution, checks may be made out to the Stan C. Parker Foundation. We will have the collection bin at this month's dinner meeting for your contributions.

Recent news coverage has focused on the Supreme Court nominee, and the overall impression is that legislative work has come to a standstill. I'd like to note the President signed bipartisan spending legislation on September 28<sup>th</sup>, funding the Department of Defense through fiscal year 2019. This is the first time in many years that a spending bill funding DoD has been passed and signed before the end of the fiscal year. MOAA continues to push for legislative actions to ensure veterans and active military and their families are properly cared for.

Join us for our monthly dinner meeting on October 18<sup>th</sup> as we hear from Sue Burdett Robinson who tirelessly works at the Waco Veterans' One Stop, counseling veterans and their families. She is currently the Clinical Program Manager of Veterans Services and you'll want to hear her story. We are in the Fall season now, so dress for men is coat and tie. And as always, "Never Stop Serving!"

Respectfully,  
Dennis DeGraff

## Upcoming Events and Information Items

### OCTOBER 18 THURSDAY DINNER MEETING AT RIDGEWOOD BANQUET ROOM, GUEST SPEAKER, DR. SUE BURDETT ROBINSON

**\*\*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: Champion salad with mesclun greens with sundried cranberries, feta cheese crumbles, spiced pecans and honey balsamic vinaigrette, Beef brisket, chicken breast, 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 16 October, 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 fall/winter code is effect with gentlemen's attire is coat and tie and ladies' attire as desired.**

**2018 CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP DUES** The Board is always looking for prospects to join the chapter. Please contact Vince Tobola, 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 1<sup>st</sup> and prorated for new members later in year. 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, **October 23, 2018**, 5 p.m., at Uncle Dan's BBQ and Rib House, 1001 Lake Air Drive, Waco.

### **SPECIAL DAY RECOGNITION**

**October Birthdays:** Lynn Day, Frank Drew, Michael Garcia, Bill Hearn, John Householder, Nora Householder, Penny Lull, Scott Pitzer, and Richard Sweeney, Norma Thronburg, Pat Young, and Doug Young. .

**October Anniversaries:** George and Pam Holmes, Rusty and Susie Rowe, and John and Su Wells.

**Congratulations & best wishes to all on your special day.**

### **GUEST SPEAKER – DR. SUE BURDETT ROBINSON**

Dr. Sue Burdett Robinson is a proud daughter of a WW2 Army veteran, daughter-in-law of a WW2 Navy veteran, niece of Army and Navy WW2 veterans, and aunt of a Marine who served as a helicopter mechanic during OIF. Sue feels she represents civilian adults in the world who continue to reinvent themselves based on life experiences just as veterans, especially career vets, who have to often reinvent themselves when transitioning back into a society after experiencing life changing events. Sue earned an Associate degree at MCC in radiologic technology and served as an x-ray tech at Kings Daughters in Temple, Gatesville hospital and clinic, and TDCJ in Gatesville. Sue was the second female staff to work on a man's prison unit in Gatesville. Sue continued school and earned a Bachelor degree in Criminal Justice from Tarleton University. She then got her Teacher Certification for grades PreK-6 and taught 4-5 grades for 3 years. Sue moved to Abilene to work at Hardin-Simmons University, where her daughter attended, and earned her Master degree in Counseling and Human Development. She obtained her License as a Professional Counselor and as a School Counselor. While working as a Junior/Senior Counselor at Clyde High School, she worked on her PhD in Counselor Education and Supervision. Sue returned to HSU to teach in the Master's program in which she was once a student. Sue retired as a Tenured Associate Professor and stood retirement as long as she could...6 months. Sue moved to Waco in February 2017 and started working at the Veterans' One Stop counseling veterans and their families. She is currently the Clinical Program Manager of Veterans Services.

### **ANNUAL VETS FEST**

The annual fundraiser by McLennan County Veterans Association will be held on Oct. 17<sup>th</sup>, Wed. 11 a.m. – 1 p.m. at the Outback Steakhouse, New Road and Franklin Avenue. Meal consists of 8 oz. chicken breast, mashed potatoes, salad, drink & cookie, \$10 donation, cash or check only. Meals can also be ordered for pick-up, 9 a.m. to Noon by calling 254-548-2668 or e-mail [obs4468@outback.com](mailto:obs4468@outback.com), also cash or check only. Donations go to assist paying for the annual Memorial Day ceremony, the annual Veterans Day Parade, and the annual Flag Retirement Ceremony.

## **APPROPRIATIONS PASSAGE**

Senate Appropriations Committee Chairman Richard Shelby (R-Ala.) praised the Senate's passage of the final conference agreement reached on H.R. 6157, the second of three Fiscal Year 2019 minibus appropriations packages, which includes funding bills for the Department of Defense and Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies subcommittees. The bill also contains a continuing resolution (CR) through December 7, 2018, for any appropriations bills not enacted before October 1, 2018. Following passage in the House, which is expected to vote on the legislation next week, the package will be sent to the President's desk for his signature.

The final conference report, which was passed by a vote of 93 - 7, provides \$674.4 billion to continue rebuilding our nation's military, an increase of \$19.8 billion above the Fiscal Year 2018 level for Pentagon funding, and \$178.1 billion for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education and Related Agencies for investments in critical medical research, opioid abuse prevention and treatment, and education. This includes \$39.1 billion for the National Institutes of Health (NIH), and increase of \$2 billion, and \$3.8 billion to combat the opioid crisis, and increase of \$206 million. The attached CR does not preclude enactment of other appropriations bills before or after October 1. Any appropriations bill enacted after the CR would supersede the provisions in the CR. The conference report and joint explanatory statement are available online.

The Defense and Labor-HHS-Education bills represent the majority of discretionary federal spending, yet neither has been signed into law before the end of the fiscal year in a decade. The legislation not only increases funding for the Pentagon and NIH, but it also provides the largest pay raise for our troops in a decade and boosted resources for opioid treatment, prevention, and recovery programs. Prior to the conference meeting with the House regarding H.R. 6157, the Senate passed its version of the package by a vote of 85 - 7. The Senate passed the final conference agreement reached on H.R. 5895, the first Fiscal Year 2019 minibus appropriations package, which includes funding bills for Energy and Water Development, Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Legislative Branch. The measure was approved by a vote of 92 - 5.

## **TRUMP SIGNA BILL TO FUND VETERANS PROGRAMS**

On 21<sup>st</sup> of September, President Trump signed the first appropriations bill of the year. The \$147.5 billion package includes full year appropriations for VA to start implementation of the VFW-supported VA *MISSION Act of 2018*, streamline the process for appealing decisions on benefit claims, reduce the rate of suicide among veterans, and modernize its electronic health care record.

## **TRICARE RECOUPS FUNDS FROM COMPOUND DRUG SCAMS**

TRICARE, the health insurance program for military personnel and retirees and their families, recognized by 2015 that it had become the target of corrupt pharmacists, doctors, and marketers peddling wildly overpriced compound drugs, mostly ointments and creams touted to ease joint pain or fade scars.

By the time TRICARE officials imposed a new method to flag and deny coverage of compound drug prescriptions favored by scammers, the military pharmacy program had been bilked out of an estimated \$1.5 billion.

In June that year, officials from the Defense Health Agency (DHA), which oversees TRICARE, met with senior officials at the Department of Justice to share their experiences with compound medication scams and to seek help on prosecution and recovery.

Results so far include 60 arrests or indictments, at least 50 fraud convictions, and recovery of more than \$280 million restored to the TRICARE program. "We can use that on health care - either TRICARE beneficiary care at military treatment facilities or for legitimate prescriptions, or to provide care to children with autism, or whatever the benefits are we have out there. That's money that is repurposed consistent with [the TRICARE] statute," said Wheeler.

More than 100 pharmacies nationwide likely were involved in the compound drug fraud against TRICARE. There is a five-year statute of limitations on prosecuting crimes of fraud against the federal government. Therefore, the Defense Criminal Investigative Service, law enforcement partner agencies, and U.S. attorney offices across the country are battling the calendar.

On progress to date with criminal prosecutions, Wheeler said "we are probably close to halfway there." However, there is no statute of limitations on recovery actions for money stolen from TRICARE or other federal programs.

## **COMPARE 2019 FEDVIP DENTAL AND VISION PLANS PLUS MORE INFO**

Starting in 2019, dental and vision insurance plans for military retirees and their families will be available through the Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP). If you're eligible, the first opportunity to enroll in a plan is during the Federal Benefits open season, which will take place from **Nov. 12 to Dec. 10**. To compare FEDVIP plans and rates before open season begins, go to <https://tricare.benefeds.com>.

The example rates are based on residential zip code; these examples were based on 76710 zip code, and monthly payments:

### **VISION PLANS**

**Aetna Vision, PPO-High:** Self only, \$12.20; Self plus one, \$24.35; Self and Family, \$36.55.

**Aetna Vision, PPO-Standard:** Self only, \$6.74; Self plus one, \$13.48; Self and Family, \$20.24.

**FEP BlueVision, PPO-High:** Self only, \$11.70; Self plus one, \$23.38; Self and Family, \$35.08.

**FEP BlueVision, PPO-Standard:** Self only, \$7.61; Self plus one, \$15.19; Self and Family, \$22.79.

**UnitedHealthcare, PPO-High:** Self only, \$10.05; Self plus one, \$19.57; Self and Family, \$29.14.

**UnitedHealthcare, PPO-Standard:** Self only, \$6.70; Self plus one, \$13.07; Self and Family, \$19.46.

**VSP Vision Care, PPO-High:** Self only, \$14.43; Self plus one, \$28.90; Self and Family, \$43.38.

**VSP Vision Care, PPO-Standard:** Self only, \$7.63; Self plus one, \$15.23; Self and Family, \$22.88.

### **DENTAL PLANS**

**Aetna Dental, PPO-High:** Self only, \$35.88; Self plus one, \$71.76; Self and Family, \$107.62.

**Delta Dental, PPO-High:** Self only, \$39.78; Self plus one, \$79.54; Self and Family, \$119.32

**Delta Dental, PPO-Standard:** Self only, \$20.48; Self plus one, \$40.97; Self and Family, \$61.43

**FEP BlueDental, PPO-High:** Self only, \$37.53; Self plus one, \$75.08; Self and Family, \$112.60.

**FEP BlueDental, PPO-Standard:** Self only, \$20.48; Self plus one, \$40.97; Self and Family, \$61.43.

**GEHA, PPO-High:** Self only, \$39.41; Self plus one, \$78.82; Self and Family, \$118.30.

**GEHA, PPO-Standard:** Self only, \$23.27; Self plus one, \$46.52; Self and Family, \$69.77.

**Humana, EPO, PPO-High:** Self only, \$24.22; Self plus one, \$48.45; Self and Family, \$72.67.

**MetLife, PPO-High:** Self only, \$38.65; Self plus one, \$77.33; Self and Family, \$115.98.

**MetLife, PPO-Standard:** Self only, \$21.17; Self plus one, \$42.36; Self and Family, \$63.53.

**United Concordia Dental, PPO-High:** Self only, \$30.55; Self plus one, \$61.10; Self and Family, \$91.61.

More details can also be found on web site link to view plan brochures and provider networks.

### **PROPOSED SCHEDULE FOR 2018 - 2019**

**15 November**, Thursday Dinner Meeting, RCC, guest speaker, Brad Livingstone, WWII Historian talking on his interviews with local WWII veterans & presentation of Baylor AFROTC scholarship awards.

**13 December**, Thursday Dinner Meeting, RCC, live entertainment by the band, The Morticians.

**17 January**, Thursday Dinner Meeting, RCC, guest speaker, Dr. Bill Milnor talking on his perspectives on the medication crisis.

**10 May 2019**, Friday Afternoon, Annual Scholarship Fundraiser Golf Tournament, Cottonwood Creek Golf Course

### **ON BASE SHOPPING PRIVILEGES TO EXPAND**

The *National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019* includes a provision to open on-base commissary, exchange and MWR privileges to stateside Purple Heart recipients, former prisoners of war, and those with service-connected disabilities and their caregiver spouses. Once implemented on Jan. 1, 2020, the new beneficiaries will be allowed to use these facilities on the same basis as any service member, dependent or military retiree, although a new user fee might be created for this population to offset additional expansion expenses. The delay to enact is to give the military services, exchange systems and Defense Commissary Agency time to ensure the launch is seamless. Gate access and shopping privileges will be based on the new VA-issued Veterans Health Identification Card (VHIC), which identifies the holder as having a service-connected disability. The DOD's electronic physical access control system, to be completed by Sept. 2019, will accept the VHIC to enable streamlined access to installations. The VFW will monitor and report back as expansion efforts progress.

## **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. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street (254 757-5600).

- **Thursday, Oct. 11, 7:45 – 9:00 a.m.**  
Technology Business Briefing, at Baylor Research & Innovation Collaborative (BRIC), 100 Research Parkway, Room 3160, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor. Talk on “How 3D Printing Can Transform Manufacturing, Really”. Free breakfast at the BRIC. RSVP to the Chamber.
- **Wednesday, Oct. 17th, 11:45 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.,** Industry Tour at McLennan County Commissioner’s Court, 501 Washington Avenue. A free catered lunch and tour will be provided. Please RSVP at web site, WacoChamber.com.
- **Tuesday, Oct. 30<sup>th</sup>, 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.,** Ridgewood Country Club, 7301 Fish Pond Road, State of the City & County, an annual update by Mayor Kyle Deavor, City of Waco and Judge Scott Felton, McLennan County. Register by Oct. 22<sup>nd</sup> at WacoChamber.com, cost is \$50.00 per person (HOT Chapter MOAA is chamber member). Cost for non-member is \$100.00.

## **TRUMP DONATES HIS SALARY TO VETERAN ENTREPRENEURS**

President Donald Trump is donating his second quarter salary to a Small Business Administration program that will help veteran entrepreneurs. At a White House briefing on October 3<sup>rd</sup>, SBA Administrator Linda McMahon accepted a \$100,000 check from the president. “This money is going to be used in our veterans program. We’re going to establish a seven-month intensive training program called ‘Emerging Leaders.’ It’s an adaptation of that program for our veterans, helping them transition from military life into private sector if they desire to start their own jobs and their own companies, and be entrepreneurs,” McMahon said. “We thank the president very much for this and it will be put to very good use.” Trump donated his first quarter salary for 2018 to the Department of Veterans Affairs for caregiver programs.

## **VA PROVIDES TRAINING FOR RURAL WOMEN’S HEALTH PROVIDERS**

The number of women veterans enrolled in VA has more than tripled since 2000, and as of May 2017 over a quarter of those women lived in rural or highly rural areas. As the demand for more gender-specific health care increases for VA, rural women veterans struggle with a lack of providers in general — let alone providers adequately trained in their gender-specific needs. Since 2009, Women’s Health Services (WHS) has been providing face-to-face education and training for clinical staff, called the Women’s Health Mini-Residency, 1-2 times per year in Orlando. Over the years, WHS realized the difficulties for rural VA providers to travel and partake in the three-day program. This summer, the program took to the road and will provide the education and training for rural providers and nurses in up to 40 rural clinical sites per year. Each provider and nurse who completes the program will receive more than 18 hours of accredited medical training.

## **VA RECEIVES FULL YEAR APPROPRIATIONS**

In late September, Congress completed the first appropriations package of the year. The \$147.5 billion package includes full year appropriations for VA to start implementation of the VFW-supported *VA MISSION Act of 2018*, streamline the process for appealing decisions on benefit claims, reduce the rate of suicide among veterans, fight the opioid epidemic, and modernize its electronic health care record.

## **SPECIAL FORCES MEDIC RECEIVES MEDAL OF HONOR**

President Trump presented the Medal of Honor to former Army Special Forces medic Staff Sgt. Ronald J. Shurer II for fighting his way through an enemy ambush to render aid to wounded Special Forces soldiers and Afghan commandos in an April 6, 2008 battle in Shok Valley in northeastern Afghanistan. Shurer was initially awarded the Silver Star for his role in the operation, but a Pentagon review of all valor medals awarded since 9/11 resulted in the award being upgraded to the Medal of Honor. Shurer is currently a special agent with the U.S. Secret Service.



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***INSIDE THIS ISSUE:***

***PRESIDENT MESSAGE***  
***OCTOBER 19<sup>TH</sup> DINNER MEETING***  
***LEGISLATIVE AND BUDGET UPDATES***  
***VETS FEST FUNDRAISER, WED. OCT. 17<sup>TH</sup>***  
***INFO AND SAMPLE COMPARISON RATES ON***  
***2019 FEDVIP DENTAL AND VISION PLANS***  
***VA APPROPRIATIONS PASSAGE***  
***WACO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE EVENTS***