



Heart of Texas Chapter (TX-07)
Military Officer Association of America
P.O. Box 23964 Waco, TX 76702-3964

Volume MMXX, Issue XII

December 2020

Chapter Web Site: hotmoaa.org

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Greetings,

We had a well-attended dinner meeting on Thursday, November 19. We used the mandated face covering and social-distancing guidelines, while still having a good time. With the recent increase in viral illness, I think we should continue to observe precautions; the Texas Medical Association has made available an activities-risk assessment chart that can be accessed online by anyone at the following link:

<https://kvia.com/news/texas/2020/11/19/how-risky-are-certain-holiday-activities-amid-the-pandemic-texas-medical-association-offers-risk-assessment-chart/>. That might help in deciding on which holiday activities need most precautions.

Our guest speaker was Mark Childers, Baylor VP for Public Safety. Mark spoke to us on his experiences as a Secret Service agent, including a White House assignment and close interaction with the President and First Lady. I think most of us have not spoken with a Secret Service agent; his anecdotes were entertaining, and he expressed his respect for our military service.

Vince Tobola talked about the benefits of joining the national MOAA organization. It is the second strongest lobbying advocate that exists for military/veterans and their families. I was not aware until recent months that I needed to join the national organization separately from our local chapter; i.e. membership in our local chapter and dues does not cover national membership dues. MOAA has three levels of membership: Basic (free), Premium (one year at \$48 and a Surviving Spouse \$43 and reduced price for 2 or 3 year memberships and Life (which varies on age group).

More info can be found at www.moaa.org/join , or printed application form that is to be posted on the chapter web site, hotmoaa.org and an article in this newsletter on MOAA membership.

We voted to adopt chapter bylaws amendments that were hammered out during two years of intense effort by the Bylaws Committee, with critical input from various members of the MOAA Board. My thanks go especially to Mike Slavens, Jim Milam, and Gary Urban for their work on the Committee. Glad we got that accomplished!

Our next dinner meeting will be the traditional early December time, Thursday December 10 this year, and we will need to use face coverings and observe social-distancing. But we can still have a good time dining and enjoying music by the Morticians (hmmm..., supposed to be a JOYFUL time of year -we'll just make it that!) and since The Morticians specialize in music from the 50's, 60's, and 70's , the food serving line order just might be determined by trivia questions from that era.

Respectfully,
William Milnor

DECEMBER SPECIAL HAPPENINGS

Birthdays: Christine Brinegar, Beau Crosby, Kris Ford, Ken Mays, Carol McHaney, Larry Pennington, Barbara Purselley, Rusty Rowe, Ann Speed, and Gary Urban.

Anniversaries: Jim and Joan Alexander, Michael and Teresa Flynn, John and Nora Householder, Harold and RoseMary Rafuse, Josh and Amy Schnelle, Don and Pam Schreiber, Russel and Renee Swann, and Paul and Norma Thronburg.

CONGRATUATIONS TO ALL

Upcoming Events and Information Items

DECEMBER 10, THURSDAY DINNER MEETING AT RIDGEWOOD COUNTRY CLUB BANQUET ROOM

Chapter updates and Entertainment by the band, The Morticians

SOCIAL HOUR: 6:00 P.M. **, **CALL TO TABLES 6:30 P.M. *, *INTRO & ANNOUNCEMENTS, VOTE ON 2021 CHAPTER ELECTION. 6:35 P.M. **, **DINNER 6:50 P.M., **DRAWING & ENTERTAINMENT 7:50 P.M.

MENU: Champion Salad with mesclun greens with dried cranberries, feta cheese, spiced pecans, and balsamic vinaigrette, Chicken breast, Top Butt Sirloin, Chef's choice of starch, vegetable and two desserts, Fresh Rolls and Butter, Fresh Brewed Iced Tea or Hot Tea and Coffee. Please note dinner charge is \$33 per person, payable at registration table, cash or check made to HOT Chapter MOAA. Please call Vince Tobola, 254-709-5795 or e-mail vtobola@aol.com, NLT Monday, 8 December, 6 p.m. for sign-ups.

Early RSVP's are welcome and appreciated.

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

NOTE: Winter dress code will be in effect, gentlemen, coat and tie and ladies attire as desired. Also, military attire is welcome.

DINNER MEETING HEALTH PRECAUTIONS

- Masks shall be worn inside at all times and all locations except when sitting at the tables.
- Drinks will be available at the bar.
- Buffet line and dessert table will have Club staff serving food items.
- Only one table at a time for food service since only one side available with Club staff serving.
- Tables will have six chairs versus normal eight.
- Please be aware of your personal conditions since fever is one of most likely symptoms of coronavirus and we all need to take proper care to protect others.

MEETING SCHEDULE FOR 2021

Ridgewood Country Club (RCC) is at 7301 Fish Pond Road.

- 21 January 2021, Thursday, Dinner meeting with installation of officers and directors and guest speaker or entertainment to be announced.
- 18 February 2021, Thursday, Dinner meeting with guest speaker or entertainment to be announced.
- 18 March 2021, Dinner meeting with guest speaker or entertainment to be announced.
- 15 April 2021, Dinner meeting with guest speaker or entertainment to be announced.
- 20 May 2021, Dinner meeting with guest speaker or entertainment to be announced.
- 4 June 2021, Annual fundraiser golf tournament, Friday afternoon at Cottonwood Creek Golf Course, Waco.

HOT CHAPTER BOARD MEETING UPDATE

The Board meeting scheduled for November 24 had to be postponed due to considerations of several members being exposed to COVID-19, upcoming holidays for which several members were already on the road, and relatively compressed time between Thanksgiving and Christmas this year. The slate of Officers and Directors for the coming year will be considered at an upcoming Board meeting, and subsequently voted on by the membership. This will be as expedient as possible, and everyone's understanding and patience is appreciated. Meanwhile, the Current Officers and Board members will continue to serve, as per the bylaws.

NEW WWI MEMORIAL

On Dec. 11, the U.S. flag will be raised over the new National World War I Memorial in Washington, D.C. for the first time during a live broadcast. The "First Colors" ceremony will trace the path of an American flag that first flew over the nation's capital April 6, 2017, commemorating the centennial of the day the United States went to war in 1917. The flag then flew over the American World War I battlefield cemeteries of Europe, honoring the 116,516 Americans who gave their all during the war. Its final destination is Washington, where the flag will in perpetuity above the National World War I Memorial. More information at following: www.lcc.org. on the broadcast.

ENTERTAINMENT – THE MORTICIANS

The Waco-based Morticians have been a mainstay of the Central Texas music scene since the band was formed by five high school students in 1965. Devoted to classic rock from the '50s, '60s and '70s, the group earned "Best Oldies Band" for 2006, 2007 and 2008 from the Music Association of Central Texas and has been voted "Best Band" in Central Texas in the Waco-Tribune Herald's Annual Reader's Poll several times. Band members have come and gone over the years, but The Morticians' distinct sound has always remained.

REMEMBERING DECEMBER 7TH

"December 7th, 1941 – a date which will live in infamy – the United State of America was suddenly and deliberately attacked by naval and air forces of the Empire of Japan ... Always will we remember the character of the onslaught against us. No matter how long it may take us to overcome this premeditated invasion, the American people in their righteous might will win through absolute victory.", per President Franklin D. Roosevelt, in a speech to Congress on Dec. 8, 1941.

There were 2,008 Navy personnel killed in action, 218 Army personnel killed in actions, 109 Marines killed in action and 68 civilian casualties.

There were 15 Navy Medal of Honor recipients and 51 Navy Cross recipients.

Three Navy ships were lost: Arizona BB 39, Oklahoma BB 37 and Utah AG 16.

Eighteen ships were repaired and returned to service. One Navy ship sunk, raised, repaired and present at Tokyo Bay during Japan's formal surrender Sept. 2, 1945 (West Virginia BB 48).

2021 CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP DUES

The Board is always looking for prospects to join the chapter; please contact Vince Tobola, 254-709-5795 and he will provide chapter information as needed and a membership application, which is also on the chapter web site, hotmoaa.org. Chapter member dues are \$25 and are due starting January 1 and will be prorated for new members joining later in year. Renewals can be paid at the dinner meeting or mailed to HOT Chapter MOAA, PO Box 23964, Waco, TX 76702. Thank you for your support.

PERSONAL DOCUMENT UPDATES

As the 2021 looms in the near future, you may consider reviewing your important personal documents for any updates due to individual life and/or family changes.

STATUS OF NATIONAL PERSONNEL RECORDS CENTER IN ST LOUIS OPERATIONS

The facility's on-site staff will continue its work to accommodate veterans or family members who need records in relation to:

- Burial honors
- Life-threatening medical emergencies
- Homeless veterans seeking entry to shelters
- Any "comparable emergencies," per the center's website

Individuals with emergencies can submit a Standard Form 180 via fax to (314) 801-0764.

The center entered this emergencies-only status March 23, but began a gradual reopening on June 24 as COVID-19 cases slowed. This reopening process allowed a 20% operational capacity for most of October, but "on-site exposures to staff" led to a regression to emergency-only levels on Nov. 7.

Even emergency requests face delays under this process. Families seeking records to confirm burial eligibility in a VA national cemetery can visit www.va.gov/burials-memorials/eligibility for more information; casketed interments will be prioritized over cremated interments.

The majority of burial requests can be approved without access to National Personnel Records Center materials. MOAA Premium and Life members can download Your Guide to Military Burials.

DOD DEPLOYING MEDICAL PERSONNEL

The Defense Department deployed dozens of medical personnel to two state and one territory to bolster civilian medical facilities battling COVID-19, and hundreds more remain on standby as the pandemic surges. Sixty-seven Air Force nurses and other personnel deployed to hospitals and long-term care facilities in North Dakota, while 62 medical personnel deployed to three hospitals in El Paso, Texas, and a critical care team is operating out of a hospital in Guam. DOD personnel also are helping with telemedicine on the island, said Kenneth R. Rapuano, the assistant secretary of defense for homeland defense and global security, in a Nov. 24 briefing. In addition, there are hundreds of personnel on prepare-to-deploy orders, and more than 20,000 National Guardsmen deployed across 52 states and territories to help with the response, he said.

MOAA CONTINUES PUSH TO PROTECT PAY RAISE AND MEDICAL BENEFITS AS BUDGET DEADLINE NEARS

the Senate Appropriations Committee released the texts of all 12 appropriation bills for FY 2021 on Nov. 10, including a defense appropriations package totaling \$688 billion.

The bill would provide the necessary funding for DOD for the new fiscal year, which began Oct. 1. The federal government and its agencies are operating under a continuing resolution at FY 2020 spending levels, which is due to expire Dec. 11.

Members of Congress face a narrowing timeline to pass a budget before the December deadline; if they can't, they'll need to pass another continuing resolution to avoid a government shutdown. Initial indications from the congressional leaders appeared positive that both chambers would pass the appropriations bills before the close of the year. However, each passing day Congress fails to act makes it increasingly more difficult for lawmakers to finish their work.

Congressional leaders may opt for another stopgap spending bill, potentially through either February or March of next year. However, recent reports show leaders from both parties lining up behind an appropriations omnibus – one bill covering the entire government – in lieu of a continuing resolution. Signs point to the president approving this approach, though the administration has taken issue with it in the past.

Why is this critical to MOAA members?

Limping along under continuing resolutions prevents DoD from enacting meaningful reforms and improvements, including many MOAA-supported measures that could become law as part of the still-in-discussion FY 2021 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA).

So far there are two MOAA-supported provisions that appear in both the House and Senate versions of the FY 2021 defense appropriations bill.

Military Health System (MHS)

Reform. MOAA has been actively advocating for a halt to proposed cuts to military medical capacity until the Defense Health Agency conducts a comprehensive reassessment of civilian medical capacity to ensure continued beneficiary access to high quality care.

The Senate defense funding bill underscores MOAA's concerns and would require DOD to submit detailed implementation plans prior to the obligation of funds to close or restructure any military treatment facilities (MTFs).

According to the Senate Appropriations Committee, there is concern about methodology gaps found in DOD's assessments, which used incomplete and inaccurate information about civilian health care quality, access, and cost-effectiveness. Due to these gaps, DOD leaders may not fully understand the risks associated with the restructuring of the MTFs.

The House Appropriations Committee's statement also addresses the issue **Uniformed Services Pay Raise.** Both Senate and House versions of the defense appropriations bill will provide the funds for a 3% pay raise for active duty service members. This pay raise would be effective as of Jan. 1, 2021, and is in line with the benchmark established by the Employment Cost Index (ECI).

The Senate Appropriations Committee must vote on the 12 appropriations bills before they can advance to the Senate floor. It remains to be seen if the Senate and the House will agree on a single omnibus package to include most, if not all, of the appropriations bills into a single package. The House and Senate will still need to reconcile any differences between the two versions before moving forward. Lawmakers are also up against mounting pressure for another COVID-19 relief package, which adds more uncertainty to whether they will meet the Dec. 11 deadline.

Richard Shelby (R-Ala.), chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee, said he and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) agree they are "probably 90% together on" the 2021 appropriations bills. There are significant hurdles that will need to be settled though; for example, the Senate committee's appropriations bills do not include any emergency pandemic funds, so agreement must be reached on how much relief funding can be expected if a compromise is reached — and whether such funding will be included in the appropriations package or in a separate bill.

Consider contacting your elected officials and ask them to pass a federal budget by Dec. 11 and remind them continuing resolutions stall plans to modernize DOD and improve the lives of service members, military families, retirees, and veterans.

**ADDITION OF THREE MORE DISEASES
DUE TO AGENT ORANGE DISEASE
EFFECTS**

More than 100 representatives released a letter to House and Senate Armed Services Committee leadership urging them to retain the addition of bladder cancer, hypothyroidism, and Parkinsonism to the list of conditions presumed connected to Agent Orange exposure as part of the FY 2021 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA).

“Our Vietnam veterans should not have to wait any longer for the recognition they deserve and the benefits they are owed,” states the letter, signed by 111 representatives and led by Reps. Josh Harder (D-Calif.) and Pete Stauber (R-Minn.) “Ensuring this bipartisan and bicameral amendment remains in the final NDAA bill will mean that thousands of veterans will finally get the support they need due to their sacrifice and service.”

This letter comes after a similar letter was sent by 46 senators sharing their support. The original provision was included in the NDAA after Sen. Jon Tester (D-Mont.) included the provision which passed the Senate by a 94-6 vote.

In addition to strong support among lawmakers, over 30 veterans’ service organizations are on the record backing the addition of these Agent Orange-connected illnesses. Despite the strong base of support, passing this provision is an uphill battle.

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) scored the price tag on this provision at just under \$8 billion over 10 years. Sources are concerned that this cost will leave lawmakers balking at this provision. MOAA believes cost should not be a barrier to providing these long-delayed earned benefits to our Vietnam veterans; now, lawmakers need to hear this message from their constituents.

This is one of the final issues for legislators to resolve as they negotiate NDAA provisions.

An estimated 34,000 Vietnam veterans stand to benefit from the addition of these three Agent Orange presumptives. These veterans were loyal to our country, and we need to maintain our loyalty to them and hold Congress accountable. Consider calling or writing your lawmakers today. MOAA members can go to web site to get more info for contact.

MOAA MEMBERSHIP

The Military Officers Association of America is the country’s leading organization protecting the rights of military service members and their families. Those who belong to MOAA not only lend their voices to a greater cause, but they also gain access to extensive benefits tailored to the needs and lifestyles of military officers and their surviving spouses. MOAA members proudly hail from every branch of the uniformed services. To them, MOAA has made the same promise that they have made to their country: Never Stop Serving.

Information on MOAA membership can be found on line by visiting: www.moaa.org/join that includes information on the different levels and on line application. A paper version is also to be placed on the chapter web site, hotmoaa.org.

Basic membership dues are free. This provides access to Legislative News Updates & Advocacy Efforts; MOAA newsletters; Chapter and Council Membership and Involvement and Exclusive Discounts on Products and Travel.

Premium membership dues are: One year premium \$48 (Surviving Spouse \$43); Two-year premium \$82 (Surviving Spouse \$73) and Three-year \$108 (Surviving Spouse \$97). Premium membership includes the services above plus: Access to Member Books & Guides; Financial Education & Consumer Advice; Scholarships, Interest-free loans and Grants; Expert Advice on Military Pay & Benefits; Career Transition Resources and Subscription to Military Officer Magazine & Exclusive Publications. Annual premium memberships include the \$12 subscription to Military Officer Magazine.

Life membership dues follow in age brackets: 50 and under \$851; Age 51-55 \$801; Age 56-60 \$757; Age 61-65 \$692; Age 66-70 \$615; Age 71-75 \$529; Age 76-80 \$434; Age 81-85 \$332; Age 86-90 \$234; Age 91-95 \$145; Age 96-99 \$88 and Age 100+ Free.

Life membership includes all of the services listed above plus Fee Waived Army & Navy Club of Washington, DC and Spouse Protection on membership privilege.

Dues to MOAA are not deductible as a charitable contribution for federal tax purposes.

Again, these dues are separate from the Heart of Texas Chapter MOAA annual dues.



Heart of Texas Chapter TX07, MOAA
P.O. Box 23964
Waco, TX 76702-3964

Address label

2020 H.O.T. MOAA OFFICERS & BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President

Bill Milnor, COL, USA (ret) (Gerry) 972-533-7874
oldognew@gmail.com

1st Vice President

Michael Slavens, LtCol, USAF (ret) (Marsha) 703-898-9173
m Slavens@aol.com

2nd Vice President

Bobby Sammon, LtCol, USAF (ret) Donna) 254-715-2450
bgsammon@gmail.com

Secretary

Paul Thronburg, 1LT, USA (Norma) (254) 876-3303 (home)
tmartmgb@sbcglobal.net

Treasurer

Vince Tobola, LtCol, USAF (ret) (254) 709-5795
vtobola@aol.com

Immediate Past President

Urban, Gary, Maj, USAF (ret) 254-715-6560
garyurban1@inbox.com

Chaplain

John Wells, COL, USA (ret) (Su) coljtw@yahoo.com
 254-776-1143

Surviving Spouse Liaison

Carol McHaney (254) 716-6376

Legislative Liaison

Jon Ker, COL, USA (RET) (Terri) (254) 934-2018
jon@jonker.com

Directors

Dr. Harold Rafuse, LtCol, USAF (ret.) (RoseMary) (254) 717-8112
 Jimmie Hanes, COL, USAF, (ret) (Mary) (254) 848-5493
 Roland Duty, LT, ANG, (Mary) (254) 722-8939
 Bob Lull, COL, USA (ret) (Penny) (254) 751-7824
 Don Speed, CAPT, USAF (Ann) (254) 366-5528
 Jim Milam, COL, USAF (ret) (Laura) 254-845-1310
 Joe Augeri, Maj, USAF (ret) Karen 254-366-2544
 Carol McHaney 254-716-6376

ELECTED OFFICIALS

U.S. Senator John Cornyn Chase Tower
 517 Hart Senate Office Building 221 West Sixth St, Suite 1530
 Washington, DC 20510 Austin, TX 78701
 Website: www.Cornyn.senate.gov 512-469-6034, FAX 512-469-6020
 202-228-2856

U.S. Senator Ted Cruz
 404 Russell Senate Office Building
 Washington, D.C. 20510
 202-224-5922

U.S. Rep. Bill Flores (Waco office)
 1505 Longworth HOB 400 Austin Ave, STE 29
 Washington, DC 20515 Waco, TX 76701
 Website: www.flores.house.gov
 202-225-6105; fax 202-225-0350

USEFUL NUMBERS

MOAA Capital switchboard hotline 1-800 272-6622
 MOAA Membership 1-800 245-8762

Free Weekly E-mail Legislative Updates

Subscribe to MOAA's Free Weekly E-mail Legislative Updates:
[\(https://www.moaa.org/\)](https://www.moaa.org/) click on Legislative Action Center or call (800) 234-6622 (MOAA) to get the information.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN
DINNER MEETING DEC 10 – INCLUDES
CHAPTER UPDATES & LIVE ENTERTAINMENT
BY THE BAND, THE MORTICIANS
LEGISLATIVE AND VA UPDATES
MOAA NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION
REMEMBERING DEC. 7 & NEW WWI MEMORIAL
CHAPTER BOARD MEETING UPDATE