



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

Volume MMXXI, Issue VIII

August 2021

Chapter Web Site: hotmoaa.org

President's Column

Greetings,

Last month's dinner meeting featured an opening patriotic song, "This Is My Country", led by Judy Bauer with her magnificent voice, and accompanied by Ken Ratajczak on his guitar. Later in the evening Ken entertained us with his impersonation of John Denver singing several beautiful songs, accompanied by wife Anne who played tambourine. That was great entertainment.

The MOAA Board met on July 27. The Board voted to approve a MOAA chapter coin that can be used for commemorating various occasions and will be used as a memento to thank our dinner meeting speakers in the future; also the coins will be on sale to our members and any profit from such sales will be transferred to our scholarship fund.

The fundraising survey results were discussed by the Board; although the response level to the email survey was low, there was overwhelming support for continued funding of our various monetary awards programs. Also supported was a direct donation campaign, and the majority favored continuing the golf tournament in the spring.

On the pandemic front, confusion remains. The only consistent thing I can see during the past months of it all has been that the immunizations appear to be effective in helping to prevent transmission of the virus, and in helping to mitigate the illness severity if the virus is transmitted to a vaccinated individual. So my advice is that each of us should talk with his/her personal physician about getting the vaccination if that has not been done already.

Next month we are expecting to hear from one of our newest chapter members, Terry Flood,

who plans to talk about soldiers transitioning to civilian life and the role of service organizations in helping them to overcome obstacles. Please sign up for the dinner: fun and great company too!

Respectfully,
Bill Milnor

MEETING SCHEDULE FOR 2021

Ridgewood Country Club (RCC) is at 7301 Fish Pond Road. Meetings are normally held on the third Thursday.

- **16 September 2021**, Luncheon, Baylor Club – President's Suite, located 5th floor, entrance on I-35 side of stadium and past the Baylor Club and Founder Club's entrances, Guest Speaker, Kevin Davis.
- **21 October 2021**, Dinner Meeting, Speaker or Entertainment to be announced.
- **18 November 2021**, Dinner Meeting, Speaker or entertainment to be announced.
- **9 December 2021**, Dinner Meeting, Election and Live Entertainment by the band, The Morticians.

HOT CHAPTER BOARD MEETING

The next Board meeting will be on Tuesday, August 24, 5 p.m., at Uncle Dan's BBQ, 1001 Lake Air Drive, which is located near the intersection with Valley Mills Drive and Lake Air Drive.

FREE LUNCHEON FOR VETERANS

The 10th Annual Veterans Appreciation Luncheon will be held on **Wednesday, Aug. 18th**, 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Lee Lockwood Library & Museum, 2801 West Waco Drive, Waco, with guest Speaker Senator Brian Birdwell, LTC, USA (ret). It is full smoked brisket lunch with all the trimmings. Doors open at 10:30 and program will start at 11 a.m. sharp. It is free but **RSVP's are required** – stanparkerfoundation@gmail.com. Spouses are welcome. For more information, contact Stan Parker. 254-749-4934.

Upcoming Events and Information Items

AUGUST 19 THURSDAY DINNER MEETING
AT RIDGEWOOD COUNTRY CLUB
BANQUET ROOM
GUEST SPEAKER – TERRY FLOOD
SOCIAL HOUR: 6:00 P.M. **, **CALL TO
TABLES 6:35 P.M. *, *INTRO &
ANNOUNCEMENTS 6:40 P.M. **, **DINNER
6:55P.M., **DRAWING & GUEST**
SPEAKER 7:50 P.M.

MENU: Grilled peach salad, Salmon Teriyaki, French Country Stew with beef tips, Chef's choices on vegetables, starch, and two desserts, Fresh Rolls and Butter, Fresh Brewed Iced Tea or Hot Tea and Coffee. Please note meal cost 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 Tuesday, 17 August, Noon for sign-ups.

Early RSVP's are welcome and appreciated. After this time, please contact Vince Tobola as soon as possible if plans change on attending and we will work to accommodate you at the dinner meeting. Dinner cost may be charged for missed attendance, depending on total turnout for the meeting date.

NOTE: Summer dress code will be in effect, gentlemen, collared shirts and slacks, optional for coat and/or tie and ladies attire as desired. Masks are no longer required at Ridgewood Country Club

AUGUST SPECIAL DAY RECOGNITION
August Birthdays: Wendy Adamo, Joan Alexander, Karen Augeri, Anne Bowman, Ron Dampier, Linda Day, Sally McErlean, Pete Patrick, Bobby Sammon and Pam Schreiber.

August Anniversaries: Charles and Wendy Adamo, Stan and Lori Brubaker, Beau Crosby and Kathy Endres, Lynn and Linda Day, Willie and Gloria DuBose, Henry and Hope Hacker, Bob and Penny Lull, Robert and Lyn Powers, and Tony and Claire Raineri.

CONGRATUATIONS TO ALL

BIO – GUEST SPEAKER – TERRY FLOOD

- Served in US Army 2002-2019
- Promoted to E-7 (SFC) within 7 years
- Selected for 1SG by 10th year
- Served more than 40 months in Afghanistan
- Medically retired in 2019 as Army Field Artillery Targeting Officer
- Worked for Veterans Affairs as a Public Contact Legal Administrator
- Currently is installation risk management coordinator for III Corps and Fort Hood
- Single custodial father of four and resides in Belton

MEMBERSHIP CORNER

We have some good news – our total membership has grown by two since our last report – bring us to 95 members. **Gerry Milnor**, wife of our President, Bill Milnor, has joined as an Associate Member. We still have 11 Associated Membership slots that can be filled by the spouse of a Regular Member. The membership rate (prorated) will be only \$10.42 if you join in August. And, our **Texas State Senator, Brian Birdwell, Army LTC (Ret)**, has been selected to become our second Honorary Member.

Now the not so good news – we failed to add a new Regular Member this last month, breaking our short success string of adding one in each of the last three months. We are reaching out to those who are eligible to join us, but they are not reaching back. Show us **YOUR** skills of finding someone who is eligible to become a member and persuading them to join the Chapter. If successful, you will be recognized at **Recruiter of the Month**, and I will buy you a drink at the next dinner/meeting.

Jim Milam Membership Chairman

AREA EVENT IN SEPTEMBER

The Central Texas Chapter MOAA is hosting their annual scholarship golf tournament on Monday, September 20th at Wildflower Country Club, 4902 Wildflower Lane, Temple, TX. Registration starts at 8:00, Shotgun start at 9:00 a.m., and Lunch and Awards at 1:00 p.m. Lunch is included with registration. Individual player fee is \$125 and team fee is \$500. Sponsorship levels are available. More details and online registration and sponsor forms are available at the web site, www.centexmoaa.org. For more information, you can also contact Roy Myer, 573-855-7173. P. 2

RURAL MENTAL HEALTH BILL BECOMES LAW

In early July, the president signed into law S.1468, the Sgt. Ketchum Rural Veterans Mental Health Act of 2021. Sgt. Brandon Ketchum served in the Marine Corps, completing tours in both Afghanistan and Iraq. In his first tour alone, he cleared 92 roadside bombs in 7 months – service that earned him a Combat Action Ribbon. In 2016, Sgt. Ketchum died by suicide after he was denied access to mental health services at a VA facility in Iowa, related to his battle with post-traumatic stress disorder. This law will require VA to report an assessment of health needs for rural and highly rural veterans and provide an account of VA’s outpatient mental health care, residential programs, and VA’s Rural Access Network for Growth Enhancement (RANGE) program cost savings.

NATIONAL PARK ACCESS FOR VETERANS BILL INTRODUCED

In early July, Rep. Miller-Meeks introduced the Veterans in Parks Act, which would provide free access to national parks and public lands for service members, veterans, and their families. This bill would codify the existing benefits of the annual America the Beautiful Pass, ensuring that those who qualify for the pass would have a lifetime of free access to more than 2,000 of our nation's parks and federal recreation areas.

BUDGET PROCESS STARTED ON NDAA

The House and Senate Armed Services Committees have started the process of marking up their chamber’s version of the FY 2022 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). Both chambers aim to close out most of the markup process before Congress adjourns for its annual August recess and elected officials return to their home states, though other competing priorities on the Hill may change those plans.

The House already has introduced its version of the FY 2022 NDAA, containing topline funding for defense programs. As for the Senate, there is no publicly available version yet. However, this is not unusual; the bill worked on by the Senate Armed Services Committee will typically be formally introduced as the original version to the full Senate rather than being introduced prior to or during the subcommittee/committee markup process. Much of the authorizing process, under Senate rules, is done during closed sessions.

Consideration by committee is one of the first hurdles any bill, including the NDAA, must overcome in the legislative process. It is also the hurdle where most legislation stalls and, as a result, does not advance any farther. Markup is the final step in the committee consideration phase of the legislative process: The subcommittees and full committees will deliberate the bill in session, then vote on whether to report it out of the subcommittee/full committee.

How hard is it to clear this hurdle? Of the 16,601 introduced in the 116th Congress (2019-2020), only 344, or 2%, became enacted laws.. That’s down slightly from the 115th Congress, when 13,556 pieces of legislation were introduced and 443 were enacted, about 3%. This single-digit percentage has been the trend for the last five decades. Despite these low numbers, Congress has successfully passed the NDAA into law for 60 consecutive years. There is no law that requires Congress to do this; the NDAA is still just a bill, like any other legislation.

Here’s a list of the subcommittee/full committee markups set for the House and Senate Armed Services Committees:

- **Monday, July 19:** Senate subcommittees on Strategic Forces and Cybersecurity.
- **Tuesday, July 20:** Senate subcommittees on Readiness and Management Support, Personnel, Airland, Emerging Threats and Capabilities, and Seapower.
- **Wednesday, July 21:** Full Senate Armed Services Committee markup.
- **Wednesday, July 28:** House subcommittees on Cyber, Innovative Technologies, and Information Systems; Strategic Force; Seapower and Projection Forces; and Military Personnel.
- **Thursday, July 29:** House subcommittee on Tactical Air and Land Forces; Readiness; and Intelligence and Special Operations.
- **Wednesday, Sept. 1:** Full House Armed Services Committee Markup.

The NDAA is not a budget bill; unlike the 12 appropriations bills, not passing the NDAA by Oct. 1 won’t result in a funding lapse or a shutdown. However, the annual NDAA establishes new DOD policies and programs and can re-authorize programs set to expire; without timely passage of both appropriations and authorization legislation, significant issues can arise with the military pay raise, high-quality health care coverage and other support programs.

STATE LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION

Property Taxation

- Texas Public Policy Foundation Poll: over 70% of voters felt property relief is a major issue
 - Texas Public Policy Foundation ranks Texas as having the 6th highest property tax rate nationally:
 - HB 988 passed Jun 16, 2021 relating to ad valorem taxation; creating a criminal offense. Bill has 31 sections attempts to make a more accountable tax system
 - Governor Abbott added property tax relief to the July 2021 special legislative session; however, lack of a quorum has prevented action.
 - Several house bills relating to limitations on amount of ad valorem taxes a taxing unit may propose and constitutional amend on the same (HB 78, 122, 126, 182, 223, HB291: HJR2, 4, 6, 11, 17, 21, 24, 25, 28) all filed in Jul 2021
 - Senate Joint Resolutions 1, 2, 4, related bills dealing with constitutional amendment to provide for the reduction of the amount of a limitation on the total amount of ad valorem taxes that may be imposed on the residence homestead of the elderly of disabled, filed Jul 7, Jul 8, Jul 14
- (Sources: <https://capitol.texas.gov/Search> ; [Legiscan.com](https://legiscan.com); <https://texasscorecard.com/>)

VA AND AGENT ORANGE PRESEUMPTIVE CONDITIONS

To qualify for Agent Orange-related VA benefits, veterans must have one or more of the conditions VA presumes to have been caused by exposure to the herbicide, including: Chronic B-cell leukemia, Hodgkin's disease, Multiple myeloma, Prostate cancer, Respiratory cancers, Soft tissue sarcomas, AL amyloidosis, Chloracne, Diabetes mellitus type 2, Ischemic heart disease, Parkinson's disease, Early-onset peripheral neuropathy, and Porphyria cutanea tarda. VA officials added three new Agent Orange presumptive conditions in May 2021; these were bladder cancer, hypothyroidism and Parkinsonism.

COST OF LIVING ALLOWANCE WATCH

The June 2021 CPI is 266.412, 5.1 percent above the FY 2021 COLA baseline. The Consumer Price Index for July is scheduled to be released Aug. 11. The CPI baseline for FY 2021 is 253.412.

MILITARY OBSERVANCES IN AUGUST

August 4 – Coast Guard Birthday

August 7 – Purple Heart Day.

National Purple Heart Day honors men and women who have been wounded or killed in military service.

August 8 – VJ (Victory over Japan) Day (1945)

August 29 – Marine Forces Reserve Birthday

LOCAL AREA ACTIVITIES

- Westfest in town of West, 3 evening, 4 & 5 September daytime and evenings, Labor Day Weekend. Parade downtown West at 10 a.m. Saturday. Czeck festival to return and celebrate 45 years with various music performances, dancers, food items, midway rides and more. Information on admission prices, map and full schedule at www.westfest.com. There is also an article in the August issue of the Waco Today magazine.
- Sorghum Fest at Homestead Craft Village, Monday, Sept. 6, 10 a.m. – 5 p.m., free admission. Includes sorghum pressing and syrup making process, food items as outdoor BBQ and Brick Oven Pizza, fresh cranked ice cream, horse-drawn hayrides, and demonstrations of various fine hand-crafts and special music at noon. The festival is at Homestead Craft Village, take I-35 to Elm Mott exit 343; go west on FM 308 for 3 miles, then north on FM 933 for 1 ½ miles. (Watch for signs.) Turn west on Halbert Lane and proceed half mile to entrance. More info at www.homesteadcraftvillage.com or phone contact 254-754-9600.
- Texas Sports Hall of Fame, 1108 S. University Park Drive, Waco. Open Monday – Friday, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m., Sunday closed. Admission, Adults: \$8, Seniors (60+): \$7, College I.D. \$6, Students (ages 6-18): \$4, Children (under 5), free and Active/Veteran Military (w/I.D.), Free.
- Dr. Pepper Museum at 300 S. 5th Street in downtown Waco. Hours of operation : Mon. – Wed., 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.; Thurs. – Sat., 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Sun. 12 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. Admission fees; Adults, \$10; Senior adults (65+), Military with ID and Educators with ID, Students and Children. \$6 and children 4 and under, free. Free parking across 5th Street. Call 254-757-1025 for info.

PASSPORT INFO UPDATE FROM CONGRESSMAN PETE SESSIONS OFFICE

As you plan to travel overseas, please take note that the U.S. Department of State is currently experiencing a significant influx of applications and massive backlog, due to disruptions from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The State Department currently has a backlog of between 1 and a half million to 2 million applications. Therefore, they are prioritizing high risk applicants, particularly those with life-or-death travel situation and are unable to guarantee appointments for all travelers.

We understand that you may be in need of a new passport or passport renewal. My office is working hard to assist you in a timely manner and ask you remain patient as we work with the State Department's extended waiting period. Those with non-life threatening, or non-time sensitive situations, should wait to obtain new or renewed passports, as this will help the State Department prioritize effectively.

APPOINTMENTS

- Routine passport service can take up to 18 weeks from the day a customer submits their application to the day they receive a new passport. The 18-week timeframe includes up to 12-weeks for application processing and up to six weeks for mailing times on the front and back end.
- Expedited passport service can take up to 12-weeks from the day a customer submits their application to the day they receive a new passport. The 12-week timeframe includes up to six weeks for application processing and up to six weeks for mailing times on the front and back end.
- If you are trying to get a passport, we highly recommend you plan for a 12-to-18-week processing time frame.

PASSPORT TIPS

- Send application via trackable mail.
- Pay extra fee for 1-2 day delivery.
- Check that your passport will not expire for 6+ months after trip starts in case of unexpected delays while traveling out of country.
- Do not wait until it is about to expire.

PHILIPS'S RECALLS SPECIFIC SLEEP AND RESPIRATORY CARE DEVICES

Philips has released a recall notification for several of their Bi-Level PAP and CPAP devices, such as Dream Station. Potential health risks such as headaches, nausea, and cancer have been identified with the polyester-based polyurethane foam that reduces the machines' noise. Philips recommends that patients using Bi-Level PAP and CPAP devices discontinue use and consult their physicians. However, patients using life-sustaining mechanical ventilator devices should not discontinue use without consulting their physicians. More information can also be found at www.philips.com/SRC-update.

HOUSE HEARING ON VA EXTENDED CARE PROGRAM

At end of July, the House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Health conducted a hearing on access to VA's home and community-based services. Ideally, these services allow veterans to remain in their homes and receive support as they age. Executive Director, VA Office of Geriatrics & Extended Care Dr. Scotte Hartronft addressed VA's focus on expanding these services, as well as modernizing and improving systems for healthy aging including facility-based care, technological access, and geriatric expertise.

KENDALL BECOMES NEXT SECAF AND OTHER SERVICES

The Senate confirmed Frank Kendall III to be the 26th Secretary of the Air Force on July 26, ending a nomination process stalled by holds from three senators. Kendall, the former No. 3 official in the Pentagon in the Obama administration, will take over a service pressing Congress for permission to retire aging airframes and overhaul its fleet to prepare for future conflict with near-peer countries, such as China. Under the Obama administration, Kendall served as the under-secretary of defense for acquisition, technology and logistics at the Pentagon between 2012 and 2017. He was previously the vice president of engineering at Raytheon.

This latest move fills two of three military service positions. Christine Wormuth was confirmed as the first female Army secretary in May; Carlos Del Toro, nominated to lead the Navy, still awaits a vote.



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

Address label

2021 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
mslavens@aol.com

2nd Vice President

Jim Milam, Col, USAF (ret) (Laura) 817-909-3588
jimmilam@aol.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
 Bob Lull, COL, USA (ret) (Penny) 254-751-7824
 Don Speed, CAPT, USAF (Ann) 254-366-5528
 Joe Augeri, Maj, USAF (ret) (Karen) 254-366-2544
 Carol McHaney 254-716-6376
 Ennis Sullivan (Kay) 214-797-1464
 Beau Crosby, Col, USAF (ret) (Kathy Endres) 254-709-9588
 Barbara Purselley 254-716-4572
 Ken Ratajczak, COL, USA (ret) (Anne) 254-776-4804
 George Littell, 1LT, USA (Helen) 713-254-0972
 Norma Thronburg (Paul) 254-749-0957

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
 127A Russell Senate Office Building
 Washington, D.C. 20510
 202-224-5922

U.S. Rep. Pete Sessions Office of Congressman Pete
 2204 Rayburn Building Sessions – 17th District of TX
 Washington, D.C. 20515 400 Austin Avenue Suite 302
 202-225-6105 Waco, TX 76701
 254-633-4500

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 AUGUST 19 – GUEST
SPEAKER – TERRY FLOOD
MEMBERSHIP CORNER
LEGISLATIVE AND BUDGET UPDATES
STATE LEGISLATIVE INFO
LOCAL AREA ACTIVITIES
AGENT ORANGE PRESUMPTIVE CONDITIONS
SERVICE SECRETARY APPROVALS