



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

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Chapter Web Site: hotmoaa.org

President's Column

Greetings,

Our August dinner meeting was well attended.

We voted to purchase 200 commemorative coins that display our MOAA and chapter emblems, and those are expected to be available in the next couple months. We will use some of them as mementos for our dinner speakers and others who do our chapter a service; individual members will be able to purchase coins at a price soon to be determined. Any monies raised by the sale of the coins to individuals will be applied to our scholarship fund.

We heard an outstanding presentation at the August dinner meeting by member Terry Flood, installation risk management coordinator for III Corps and Fort Hood, concerning the need for continued camaraderie following military service, including the need for networking to maintain social contact and to find employment, and the need for organizations such as ours to join together to support veterans in need of our help.

As a follow up to Terry Flood's presentation, he has introduced a website, "Crossing the Bridge" that he is building, and it is available for our inspection and comment. The website includes an introductory video, and a first lesson titled "Networking," which he told us is very important for those transitioning from military to civilian life and in need of a job, as well as some friends in the local area. The website is www.crossing-the-bridge.org; his email in case you have comments is tdflood82@gmail.com.

The recent Veterans Appreciation Luncheon in Waco was a good example of camaraderie, well attended by our members as well as other veterans from the area. We heard a presentation by Sen Brian Birdwell at the luncheon; and Sen Birdwell

has accepted our invitation to become an Honorary Member of our chapter, and to speak at one of our upcoming dinner meetings.

At this point, I am very proud and optimistic that our organization, our MOAA chapter, is contributing to the full spectrum of military leadership. Specifically and particularly we are helping at the beginning of the spectrum to educate the future leaders of the military through scholarship programs, and we are helping at the other end of the spectrum by helping officers transition to productive civilian life after military service.

At the next meeting we will recite Pledges of Allegiance to the American flag, and then to the Texas flag. That has been done at several meetings that I have attended recently, including the Veterans Appreciation Luncheon in Waco, attended by a good number of our MOAA HOT Chapter members. For those not so familiar with the Texas pledge, copies will be provided on the dinner tables; shown also on page 4 of the newsletter.

Remember: the next meeting is at the Baylor Club for a lunch time meeting rather than the usual evening dinner at Ridgewood Country Club.

Finally, confusion STILL remains concerning how best to respond to the Covid pandemic: masks, vaccinations, social distancing and not socializing for work or recreation. It seems to be more frustrating than it should be; a mixture of politics and science, although not "political science" as we studied the subject in school. Again, the only consistent thing that I see, that makes sense to me, is the vaccinations; and I plan to get the third dose ("booster") in the next couple months. So I recommend that each of us talk with his/her family doctor about how to proceed.

Respectfully,
Bill Milnor

Upcoming Events and Information Items

THURSDAY LUNCHEON MEETING 16 SEPTEMBER 16, 2021, AT MCLANE STADIUM – PRESIDENT’S SUITE, HOSTED BY BAYLOR CLUB. ENTER PARKING LOT THRU GATE 1, OFF OF MKL BLVD AND BEAR RIGHT. ITS SPECIFIC ENTRANCE IS THE LAST DOORWAY ON I-35 SIDE OF MCLANE STADIUM AFTER THE REGULAR ENTRANCES FOR BAYLOR CLUB AND FOUNDERS CLUB; THERE WILL BE SIGN ON THE SIDEWALK. Go thru doorway and take elevator to the fifth floor. You can park in any space; the numbered spaces are only used during football events.

Guest Speaker is Ken Davis, Program Manager for Baylor University VETS program with presentation, “Empowering the NEXT Chapters of Servant Leadership”.

SOCIAL PERIOD: 11:00 A.M. **, **CALL TO TABLES 11:35 A.M. *, *INTRO & ANNOUNCEMENTS 11:40 A.M. **, **LUNCH 11:50P.M. , **DRAWING & GUEST SPEAKER 12:20 P.M.**

MENU: Tossed salad, fresh fruit salad, artisan bread, Parmesan Crusted Chicken, Marinated Sirloin Steak, Roasted Asparagus, Garlic Mashed Potatoes, Dessert, Fresh Brewed Iced Tea or Hot Tea and Coffee. Please note lunch cost is \$30 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, 13 September, 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 lunch 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.

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.

SEPTEMBER SPECIAL DAY RECOGNITION

Birthdays: Kathy Albert, Lyn Anderson, Jim Buehrig, Debby DeGraff, Mary Duty, Don Edwards, Elizabeth Garcia, Jerry Gordon, Bill Perdue, Tim Pfanner, Robert Ross, and Madeline Sweeney.

Anniversaries: Thomas and Kathy Albert, Larry and Mary Gee, Pete and Susan Patrick, and Billie and Mauve Sawyer.

Note on missing August anniversary for Jim and Laura Milam.

CONGRATUATIONS TO ALL

SEPTEMBER REMEMBRANCE DATES

- 4th, US Coast Guard (USCG) Birthday
- 10th, Purple Heart Day
- 10th, U.S. Department Of Defense Birthday
- 11th, “9/11” Attacks
- 14th, Navajo Code Talkers Day
- 14th, President Roosevelt announced VJ (Victory of Japan) Day, Formal surrender ceremony occurred later, September 2, 1945, aboard the USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay
- 29th, Marine Corps Reserve Birthday

WACO AREA 9/11/2001 REMEMBRANCE CEREMONY ON SEPT. 11, SATURDAY

On September 11, 2021, in honor & remembrance of those who died, those who served and those who carry on, there will be a ceremony in the Parking Lot of the Lee Lockwood Library & Museum, 2801 W. Waco Drive, Waco, Texas. **It is free to the public. Program begins at 7 a.m.**

You are invited to stand with attendees and McLennan County First Responders and Representatives from McLennan County Area Fire Departments, Law Enforcement and EMS who will be in attendance.

For more information, please contact Stan Parker at the Stan C. Parker Foundation, 254.749.4934 or stancparkerfoundation@gmail.com. This is a partnership between Stan C. Parker Foundation and KWTX News 10.

WACO INFO WEB SITE – CHECK IT OUT

The Waco Convention Center hosts a web site for use by residents and visitors at wacoheartoftexas.com. Topics include: things to do, dining, shopping, lodging, deals, events schedule, plan my visit and contact info. Thru the contact topic, you can order a Visitors Guide, a Coupon Book, and a Visitor Map.

BIO – GUEST SPEAKER – KEN DAVIS

- Currently serves as Baylor University's VETS (Veteran Educational and Transition Services) Program Manager where he supports the successful transition of Baylor's military-connected students to their next chapters of servant-leadership.
- He served in the Marine Corps as a Reconnaissance Marine from 2003 to 2007 where he deployed twice - one combat deployment to Iraq in 2005 and one deployment with the 31st Marine Expeditionary Force in 2006. After this enlistment period was up, he enrolled in McLennan County Community College and then transferred to Baylor and graduated with a B.A. in Psychology in 2012.
- Following graduation, Kevin served at the Waco VA Regional Office for over four years as a Veterans Service Representative. Then, after a significant battle with a rare and often deadly form of appendicular cancer changed his vocational direction and he found the VETS Program Manager position.
- Kevin has served in his role at Baylor for over five years and loves integrating the invaluable assets that student veterans bring to higher-education communities and institutions.
- Kevin is a passionate believer that what our transitioning veterans need most is simply a new mission. Although they have hung up the uniform their lives dedicated to service must continue for the sake of our communities foreign and domestic as well as for the sake of our veterans themselves who are wired to find ultimate identity and purpose in service of others. Baylor's mission is to 'educate men and women for leadership and service' so this seems like a perfect fit!
- Kevin has two children (one 8 years old and one 5), his wife Lizzy also works at Baylor in the Psychology department and he is currently pursuing (part-time) his Masters in Theological Studies at Baylor's Truett Seminary.

COST OF LIVING ALLOWANCE (COLA)

The official release of the new COLA will be in October and an increase is expected for 2022.

SCAMMERS COST MILITARY RETIREES AND VETERANS \$68 MILLION LAST YEAR

Military retirees and veterans far outpaced other members of the military community when it comes to damage done by financial fraud in 2020, according to federal data released in July, with \$68 million reported lost to various scams.

That figure nearly doubles the combined losses reported by active duty service members (\$13 million), National Guard and Reserve members (\$6 million), and spouses or dependents of active duty members (\$17 million) according to data from the Federal Trade Commission's Consumer Sentinel Network. Of the 66,383 fraud reports received from military consumers, nearly 29,000 were imposter scams, which can range from fraudsters impersonating Social Security or IRS officials to posing as family members or potential romantic partners to gain trust and ask for money. These scams cost military consumers \$41.3 million last year.

Other types of fraud at the top of the list:

- Fraudulent prizes, sweepstakes, and lotteries accounted for \$12.3 million in losses in 2020.
- Scams connected to online shopping or negative reviews led to \$8.1 million in losses.
- Fake business or job opportunities resulted in \$6.7 million in losses, as did fraudulent travel, vacation, and timeshare programs. The second group had the highest median loss rate (\$2,475) of all categories.
- One of our members got several e-mails about an I-Pad for \$1,289 he supposedly had ordered and to call a number to get a refund. When he called, the foreign sounding voice insisted he type in a site link, which he did not do. The rep got angry when the member did not proceed, given the site likely involved suspect ransomware or worse. Needless to say, need to stay vigilant

MEETING SCHEDULE FOR 2021

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

- **21 October 2021**, Dinner Meeting, Guest Speaker, State Senator Brian Birdwell.
- **18 November 2021**, Dinner Meeting, Speaker or entertainment to be announced.
- **9 December 2021**, Dinner Meeting, Election for 2022 and Live Entertainment by the band, The Morticians.

NAVY CAPTAIN MAKES HISTORY AS FIRST WOMAN TO COMMAND AN AIRCRAFT CARRIER

Capt. Amy Bauernschmidt, USN, became the first woman to take command of a nuclear-powered aircraft carrier Aug. 19 at a change-of-command ceremony for USS *Abraham Lincoln* (CVN-72) in San Diego.

Bauernschmidt, who was tapped for a 2022 carrier command in December along with five fellow officers, served as the carrier's executive officer from 2016-2019, the first woman to serve in that capacity aboard a nuclear-powered flattop. She recently commanded USS *San Diego* (LPD-22), an amphibious transport dock.

"There is no more humbling sense of responsibility than to know you are entrusted with the care of the people who have chosen to protect our nation," Bauernschmidt said at the Aug. 19 ceremony, according to a Navy press release. She also thanked outgoing commanding officer Capt. Walt "Sarge" Slaughter for turning over "the finest ship in the fleet."

Bauernschmidt graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Md., in 1994 and was designated as a naval aviator in 1996, according to her Navy bio. She has racked up more than 3,000 flight hours in naval aircraft.

DOD MANDATES COVID VACCINATIONS

Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin outlined details of DOD's mandatory COVID-19 vaccination protocols in an Aug. 24 memo, including a desire for "ambitious timelines" from the service branches for full implementation.

"Mandatory vaccinations are familiar to all of our Service members, and mission-critical inoculation is almost as old as the U.S. military itself," Austin wrote. "Our administration of safe, effective COVID-19 vaccines has produced admirable results to date, and I know the Department of Defense will come together to finish the job, with urgency, professionalism, and compassion."

News of the memo was first reported by The Associated Press. The policy update was expected after the full approval Aug. 23 by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) of the Pfizer vaccine. While DOD will use only fully approved vaccines as part of its inoculation program, service members who have received COVID-19 vaccines

approved under emergency use authorization by the FDA or the World Health Organization are considered fully vaccinated, per the memo.

Service members with a previous COVID-19 infection aren't exempt from the vaccine. Service members participating in vaccine trials are exempt from the requirement so as not to affect the results of those trials. Service members seeking other types of exemptions must do so through their service branch, Pentagon Press Secretary John Kirby recently told members of the media.

More than 1 million service members are fully vaccinated, according to DOD data. The service has enough Pfizer vaccine for the rest, according to the Associated Press report on the memo, which estimates more than 800,000 service members are not yet fully vaccinated.

MEMBERSHIP CORNER

Texas State Senator Brian Birdwell, Army LTC (Ret) has accepted our invitation to be an Honorary Member of our Chapter.

The search continues to find and persuade those who meet the membership criteria to join the Chapter. At the August dinner meeting we had three guests: **Matt & Julie Witt**, who are friends of Beau Crosby & Kathy Endres; and **Bill Porter**, who was discovered by Bill Milnor at the recent Veterans Appreciation Luncheon. All three enjoyed the evening at Ridgewood and showed an interest in becoming a member. And we have learned that **Captain Camron Branom, USMC**, with an EAS of 1 October and has already moved to Waco, will transfer his membership from his old MOAA Chapter in CA to our Chapter. So, we have two potential and one likely Regular Members and one Associate Member. Let's keep the search going for new members, like Beau, Kathy and Bill have done. New members that join in September will pay only \$8.33 for their 2021 membership.

The offer I made in the August newsletter continues: If you successfully recruit a new member, you will be recognized as the **Recruiter of the Month** and receive a drink on me at the next dinner meeting.

Jim Milam Membership Chairman

TEXAS PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

As mentioned in the President's column, we will add reciting the Texas pledge to the meeting. It is: "Honor the Texas flag; I pledge allegiance to thee, Texas, one state under God, one and indivisible." Copies will be available on the tables. P. 4

MEDICARE PART B COST ESTIMATED INCREASES

Your Medicare Part B costs will increase by about 6% next year, according to estimates in a Congressional Research Service (CRS) report projecting premiums through 2029.

That rate of increase would remain fairly steady through the coming decade, per the report, with most beneficiaries seeing a 57% overall increase from their 2021 premiums to their 2029 rates.

Most Medicare Part B users – those whose tax returns in 2019 were \$88,000 or less for an individual tax return (or married but filing a separate return) or \$176,000 for a joint return – are paying \$148.50 a month in 2021. That beneficiary bracket would pay \$157.70 per month in 2022 under CRS estimates, and \$234.10 in 2029.

In addition to this group, there are five levels of higher-income beneficiaries who pay higher Part B premiums based on reported income levels. These income levels will rise yearly; the CRS report does not estimate the incomes assigned to each level in future years.

MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES AVAILABLE FOR VETERANS UNSETTELED BY AFGANISTAN NEWS

Advocates are reminding veterans that help is available if headlines about the disastrous end of the U.S. mission in Afghanistan the looming Sept. 11 anniversary are triggering anxiety and mental health issues.

“Veterans should be on the lookout for red flags if news of Afghanistan starts changing behavior,” Dr. Sonya Norman, director of the Department of Veterans Affairs’ PTSD Consultation Program, said in a statement late last week. “These include isolating, using alcohol and drugs or any increase in unhealthy behaviors compared to normal.”

Even before the collapse of the Afghan government over the weekend, VA officials had been preparing for increased requests for mental health care and trauma assistance amid the ongoing U.S. military withdrawal from the country.

About 1.9 million post-9/11 veterans are currently enrolled in health care with the department. A 2014 study by department officials found that nearly 16 percent of all veterans who deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan screened positive for post-traumatic stress.

Both VA and Defense Department officials in recent years have worked to eliminate the stigmas surrounding mental health care, noting that PTSD and related issues can be handled if individuals acknowledge they are facing personal difficulties.

The department has been running a series on mental health issues on its official blog, including a feature on lessons learned from the aftermath of the Vietnam War for veterans struggling with unresolved medical issues.

The Veteran Crisis Line is also available around-the-clock at 1-800-273-8255 (veterans should select option 1 for a VA staffer.) Veterans, troops or their family members can also text 838255 or visit VeteransCrisisline.net for assistance.

Numerous lawmakers and congressional committees shared the crisis line number on social media on Monday, thanking veterans for their service and letting them know help is available.

Veterans’ service organizations are also stepping up their outreach efforts in light of the unsettling news overseas.

In a statement Monday, officials from Wounded Warrior Project noted that “developments in Afghanistan may bring back difficult memories for warriors and their families.” The group urged anyone needing assistance to contact their counselors at 888-997-2586 or through the organization’s web site.

Officials from Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America said veterans who served in the recent wars should remember that their service “was important and mattered.” The organization’s Quick Reaction Force for help is available online and at 855-917-274.

In a statement, VA Secretary Denis McDonough said that all Americans should remember the debt owed to veterans for their service. “They made our world infinitely safer,” he said. “Their service did not come without sacrifice as some carry physical and emotional wounds. We must ensure they get the world-class care they’ve earned and deserve.”

DOD RELIEF EFFORTS TO HAITI

The Defense Department’s joint task force continues to support relief efforts for the island nation as it recovers from back-to-back natural disasters. As of Aug. 24, the joint task force has conducted more than 346 missions across air, land, and sea since arriving in Haiti, assisting or saving “over 436 lives” and delivering more than 163,000 pounds of aid supplies, officials said.



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