



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

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April 2022

Chapter Web Site: hotmoaa.org

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Greetings,

We had a tremendous turnout for our March dinner meeting at the Baylor Club. Thank you all for the largest turn-out this year. Special thanks go out to our guest speaker Jim Haller who gave an insightful and very entertaining talk on his sports career and thoughts on the current state of amateur sports. Kudos to Bill Milnor for arranging Jim and his wife Judy to be our guests.

Let's have an even larger turn-out for our April dinner meeting. Our guest speaker, John Alexander, is the Executive Director of Waco Habitat for Humanity and has lived in Waco for over 20 years. His presentation will be very informative on the mission and success of Habitat for Humanity in the Waco area.

March 29th was National Vietnam War Veterans Day. We thank John Householder leading the tribute at Waco's Vietnam Veterans Memorial and to all veterans, supporters and volunteers that attended this and the Veterans One Stop event. My sources tell me that Gary Urban made a short presentation at the Veterans One-Stop and was featured on the 10 o'clock news. Congrats!

Save the Date! June 10th is rapidly approaching and our fundraiser team needs your support as we strive to exceed our previous fundraising efforts. I hope you will volunteer and/or contribute to the program's success. It is critical that we support the best and brightest future leaders. The success of our last fundraiser in 2019 allowed HOT MOAA to provide over \$15000 in scholarships and grants to deserving future leaders; 34% of our membership donated over 42% of that total. Think what we could achieve if more members contributed. To

date only 9.35% of our membership has contributed to our current fundraiser. What can we do?

1. Have at least 50% of the membership contribute to our fundraiser
2. Increase the number of business that support our fundraiser

Eleven of our members obtained the support of 54 business donors. The table below lists all 2019 business donors and these are reserved for our **Eleven** to contact.

HOT MOAA Fundraiser 2019 Donor List

"The Comfort Crew for Military Kids, AAFES, Allen Samuels Dodge Chrysler Jeep Ram Fiat, Alliance Bank, Balcones Distilling, Baylor Club, Ben Keith Distributors, Bird-Kultgen Ford, Blackhawk Aerospace, Café' Cappuccino, Cargill, Central National Bank, Chandler's Gun Shop and Shooting Range, Christian Brothers Automotive, Community Bank & Trust, Cottonwood Creek Golf Course, Creekwood Dental Arts, Dixon Golf, First National Bank of Central Texas, Green Ackors Landscaping, H-E-B, Higginbotham Insurance, Jack of All Trades, Lovett Financial, Mars & Wrigley, Matson Financial Services, McAllister's Deli-Hewitt Drive, Mystique Salon, Nemmer Eclectic, Inc., One Thirty Five Prime, Poppa's Rollo Pizza, Red Caboose Winery, Salty Dog Sports Bar and Grill, Shorty's Pizza Shack, Special Forces Association Chapter 93, Summer Palace – Hewitt, Stephen Southwell, CPA, Talon Asset Management, Texas Aero, LLC, Texas Farm Bureau Insurance, Texas Roadhouse, Texas Sports Hall of Fame, TFNB/Your Bank for Life, The Alford Company, TSTC Foundation, Uncle Dan's BBQ, USAA, Valley Mills Car Wash, Vogel's Texas Moxie Spices, Stonewood Dental, Waco Independent Community Banks, and Wilkerson-Hatch-Bailey Funeral Home.

(Continue Next Page)

Upcoming Events and Information Items

Waco's business community is growing and we can increase our fundraiser support if each of you reach out and contact **other** businesses you frequent and solicit their support. Lew Arend is our gatekeeper for business contacts. Please keep Lew informed of the businesses you contact or plan to contact to avoid confusion and duplication of effort. Lew's contact information: LewArend66@gmail.com, cell 713-254-1334.

One of our smaller fundraising efforts is our HOT MOAA Challenge Coin. They make an excellent gift and are very reasonably priced at only \$15 per coin. Net proceeds go toward our fundraising efforts. Time to pitch in! Pick up one or two at our next dinner meeting.

P.S. As former military members, you should never go to the bar without one – could be costly.

We still have some members who have not paid their dues for this year. I trust you will quickly correct this oversight. We need your continued support to grow and support our ongoing charitable veterans programs.

Finally, let's pray for our leaders, the people of Ukraine and the United States of America. They need our support.

Keep up the good work. I look forward to seeing all of you on April 21st.

Duty, Honor, Country – Always Serving

v/r
Michael Slavens

APRIL SPECIAL DAY RECOGNITION

- **Birthdays**: Charles Adamo, Judy Bauer, Gaye Baugh, Mort Bowman, Lori Brubaker, Voncyle Burns, Kathy Endres, Patsy Norman Farr, Jimmie Hanes, Gay Mays, Susan Perdue, Lyn Powers, and Dee Rogers.
- **Anniversaries**: Ted and Lyn Lawson, Bill and Susan Perdue, and Don and Ann Speed.

CONGRATUATIONS TO ALL

THURSDAY DINNER MEETING APRIL 21, 2022, AT MCLANE STADIUM – MEDIA ROOM, HOSTED BY THE BAYLOR CLUB.

Enter stadium parking lot thru gate 1, off of MLK Blvd and bear right. The media entrance is on the I-35 side of McLane Stadium and located before the Baylor Club entrance.

There will be Media Entrance sign above the inset double door entrance located almost behind the white column. Go thru the doorway and take the elevator to the fifth floor.

You can park in any space; the numbered spaces for 1-160's and 1-170's are across from the Media Entrance and has steps to get up to the walkway at the building.

DINNER SCHEDULE

**** 6:00 P.M. Social Hour**

**** 6:35 P.M. Call To Table**

**** 6:40 P.M. Intro & Announcements.**

**** 6:50 P.M. Dinner**

**** 7:50 P.M Drawing & Guest Speaker**

MENU: Fresh fruit salad, tossed salad, artisan bread, Marinated Sirloin Steak, Chicken Picatta, Medley Mixed Vegetables, Garlic Mashed Potatoes, Dessert, Fresh Brewed Iced Tea and water will be on the table.

GUEST SPEAKER, John Alexander, speaking on Waco Habitat for Humanity and projects and services they provide for community.

Please note dinner cost is \$35 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 Thursday, 14 April, 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 pants, optional for coat and/or tie and ladies attire as desired.

MEETING SCHEDULE FOR 2022

- **19 May**, Thursday, lunch meeting at President's Suite in McLane Stadium. Guest speaker will be Captain Kahli-Halabi, Woodway Public Safety Department.
- **10 June**, Annual fundraiser golf tournament, Friday lunch and afternoon at Cottonwood Creek Golf Course in Waco. Information is on the hotmoaa.org website.
- **21 July, Thursday**, dinner meeting in Media Room at McLane Stadium. Presentation of educational scholarships and "Sing Along Patriotic Songs".
- **18 August, Thursday**, lunch meeting in President's Suite at McLane Stadium. Guest speaker is Dr. T. Michael Parrish, PhD, Baylor University History talking on Doris Miller.
- **22 September, Thursday**, lunch or dinner and location under review, with guest speaker or entertainment to be announced.

2022 CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP DUES

Chapter member dues are \$25 for renewing members and are due starting January 1. Dues will be prorated for new members joining depending on the date in the year. Renewals can be paid at a chapter meeting or mailed to HOT Chapter MOAA, PO Box 23964, Waco, TX 76702.

The Board is always looking for prospects to join the chapter; please contact Ken Ratajczak, 254-776-4804 or Vince Tobola, 254-709-5795 for chapter information and a membership application.

HOT CHAPTER BOARD MEETING UPDATE

The next Board meeting is planned for Tuesday, April 26, 2022; 5:00 p.m. at Uncle Dan's BBQ and located at 1001 Lake Air Drive.

NEW MEDAL OF HONOR MUSEUM

Groundbreaking was held on March 25, 2022 for the new Medal of Honor Museum to be built in Arlington. It is expected to be complete in 2024. The museum – the first of its kind in the U.S. – will share stories of the more than 3,500 recipients of the Medal of Honor, the nation's highest award for valor in combat. Of the recipients, there are 66 living and 15 were able to attend the ceremony. The museum will sit along Mark Holtz Lake at the former Dr. Pepper Ballpark site in North Arlington.

TWO STATE PROPOSITIONS ON MAY 7 ELECTION BALLOT

Texas Proposition 1, the Property Tax Limit Reduction for Elderly and Disabled Residents Amendment, is on the ballot in Texas as a legislatively referred constitutional amendment on May 7, 2022.

- A "yes" vote supports amending the state constitution to authorize the state legislature to reduce the property tax limit for school maintenance and operations taxes imposed on the homesteads of elderly or disabled residents to reflect any tax rate reduction enacted by law from the preceding tax year.
- A "no" vote opposes this amendment, which would have extended a tax limit reduction to the homesteads of elderly or disabled residents whose tax rates are frozen when they turn 65 or buy a new property.

Texas Proposition 2, the Increased Homestead Exemption for School District Property Taxes Amendment, is on the ballot as a legislatively referred constitutional amendment on May 7, 2022.

- A "yes" vote supports increasing the homestead exemption for school district property taxes from \$25,000 to \$40,000.
- A "no" vote opposes the increasing the homestead exemption for school district property taxes to \$40,000, thereby maintaining the existing amount of \$25,000.

LOCAL EVENT WITH OPENING OF FIRE STATION #6

The City of Waco officially opened the newest Fire Station serving the Sanger-Heights neighborhood at the end of March. Fire Station #6 is positioned on the former site of the historical 25th Street Theater building at 1006 N. 25th Street in Waco. With a nod to the design of the former theater, including the neon sign and marquee, inside the fire administration building, you will find a wall dedicated to its history in Waco. The two-bay fire station itself is located at rear of the corner building. The new fire station replaces the prior Fire Station #6, which was located at 2800 Bosque Blvd built in 1940.

The 25th Street Theater was a staple in Waco history. Opening in 1945, it had air conditioning, a wide screen, and 780 seats. The average cost of an evening show at that time was 40 cents. Many Wacoans have memories of seeing their first movie there as a child, and also remember when it closed in 1982.

GUEST SPEAKER – JOHN ALEXANDER

John Alexander is the Executive Director of Waco Habitat for Humanity, a position he held from 1998 – 2013 and then again from 2019 to the present. He and his wife, Ruth, have two children: a 26-year-old daughter and a 21-year-old son. John was raised in Clear Lake City, Texas.

After graduating from Texas A&M in 1986, John worked with Habitat for Humanity International in Georgia for five years as a full-time volunteer. He and his wife then served with the Mennonite Central Committee in Nicaragua for three years. They moved to Waco in 1996, where John began working with Waco Habitat as Construction Supervisor. He attends Hope Fellowship (Mennonite) Church in Waco.

LOCAL EVENTS

- April 16, Brotherwell Brewing, 400 E. Bridge Street, Waco. Phone number 254-301-7152. Each 3rd Sunday afternoon they host the Eastside Market in their courtyard area. It is free to attend.
- April 23-24, Magnolia Silos District Marathon. Four races will be held during the weekend, all beginning from First Baptist Church. On Saturday is the 5 K at 8 a.m. and the kid's fun run at 9:30 a.m. The full and half marathons begin at 7 a.m. Sunday. More info at magnolia.com.

SAVE THE DATE - JUNE 10TH

The **June 10, 2022** annual scholarship golf fundraiser information has been to the chapter web site, hotmoaa.org. This information has also been distributed to the membership recently. Copies of the forms will also be available at the April dinner meeting and the May lunch meeting.

The golf fundraiser will be held on Friday, June 10th at Cottonwood Creek Golf Course. Registration starts at 11 a.m., lunch is available starting at 11:30 a.m. and player tee-off at 1 p.m.

The golf fee is \$125 per player and includes golf fee, cart, range balls, lunch and a gift bag. There will be various team and hole prizes plus four hole-in-one prizes. More information can be found at the website, hotmoaa.org.

MEMORIAM FOR SHIELA CLAY LEDNICKY

Sheila Lednicky passed away on March 20, 2022 and the funeral service was held on March 25, 2022.

Sheila was born March 17, 1946, with her twin sister Sherry Dell Farney in Nacogdoches, Texas to John and Alien (Popejoy) Clay. She attended schools in Kosse and Marlin, Texas. She was employed at the Thigpen Cattle Company in Chilton, Pure Milk Company, Waco and Dameron Oil Company, Waco. She was happily married to W.E. (Gene) Lednicky for 30 years, She thoroughly enjoyed traveling with her husband to Marine Corps Board meetings and reunions all over the country, to include Washington, D.C.; New Orleans, St. Louis, San Francisco, Chicago, Pensacola, Denver and many other cities. Sheila also enjoyed seeing other states and being the “pick-up” driver when Gene was delivering a new fire truck. Sheila was a life time member of the Marine Corps League of Women, VFW and American Legion Auxiliaries. Sheila was a faithful Marine; one of her favorite sayings was “I don’t need to become a Marine; I married one”. She will be greatly missed. Semper Fi.

WHITE HOUSE BUDGET PLANS FOR MILITARY

Service members would see their largest pay raise in two decades under the fiscal 2023 federal budget plan released by the White House Monday.

The \$733 billion spending proposal includes a 4.6% pay raise set to start next January as well as a new basic needs allowance to help military families living near or below the federal poverty line. But the plan would also shrink active-duty military end strength by thousands of personnel.

Lawmakers will spend the next several months debating and dissecting the White House spending outline, likely making numerous changes before a final compromise budget is reached. But the plan represents a starting point for those debates, and likely the lowest-possible level for personnel items such as the pay raise.

The last time the military pay raise was above 4.0% was in 2003 (when it was also 4.6%). In January, the raise was at 2.7%, and the figure has hovered around that mark for the past five years. But soaring inflation rates over the last year led to a rise in civilian sector wages, which in turn led to an increase in the federal formula used to calculate the military pay raise.

WHITE HOUSE BUDGET PROPOSAL FOR VA

The White House is requesting an 11% boost to the Department of Veterans Affairs budget for 2023, money that would fund anticipated increases in medical costs, expand the family caregiver program and provide for several capital improvement projects at medical centers and cemeteries.

The \$301 billion proposal marks the first time the VA's budget would exceed \$300 billion -- more than six times what it was in fiscal 2001, just before the 9/11 attacks and subsequent wars in Iraq and Afghanistan -- and moves the department second only to the Defense Department in discretionary spending.

Under the plan, mandatory spending, outlays the VA is required to pay including veterans disability compensation, life insurance and indemnity payouts and transition benefits, would see a nearly 6% increase to \$161 billion.

Discretionary spending at VA would rise to \$139 billion or 18.7% more than the department's 2022 budget. In a statement accompanying the budget documents, VA Secretary Denis McDonough said in a press release the plan would deliver "critical resources to help VA serve Veterans, their families, caregivers and survivors as well as they have served our country."

According to the proposal, the department's medical care budget would rise by 22%, to nearly \$119 billion, to address health-care inflation, anticipated increases in enrollment, growth of private sector care and expansion of other programs.

The plan calls for bolstering the budget for in-house VA medical care by 20%, to \$70.6 billion, and for VA-covered private health services, also known as community care, by 22% to \$28.5 billion. It would increase funding for mental health-care programs by 15% to \$8.5 billion and for prosthetics care, to \$4 billion, up 8%.

VA's caregiver services also would see an increase in fiscal 2023, with the department proposing a 31% increase, or a total of \$1.8 billion, to compensate those enrolled in the Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers. The increase would allow VA to cover caregivers expected to apply after eligibility broadens on Oct. 1, 2023 to include seriously injured and disabled combat veterans who served from May 7, 1975, to Sept. 10, 2001.

Also, it would enable VA to continue assessing and processing 109,000 applications it has received since last October from veterans who served during the Vietnam War and earlier, while also considering appeals from those who were dismissed from the program, according to the budget documents.

The VA announced at end of March that it was pausing reviews that could force up to 90% of caregivers from that program, an unintentionally high figure according to officials. The budget also includes additional funding to combat veterans' homelessness and fund suicide prevention programs, to include hiring more staff to man the Veterans Crisis Line and assist as it transitions to the new three-digit 988 phone number.

The department also said it will expand women's health-care services, requesting \$767 million for gender specific care and to support efforts to improve access to maternity care, obstetrics and gynecological care.

The VA is also planning to ask Congress for legislation that would allow it to expand veterans' access to fertility services, to include covering in vitro fertilization and adoption reimbursement for some veterans, and to eliminate copayments for contraception care and services.

Also included in the proposed budget is \$2.3 billion to fund construction and improvements at several major medical facilities, including seismic upgrades to facilities in Portland, Oregon, and Fort Harrison, Montana, and constructions and renovations in Canandaigua, New York, as well as construction or replacement of at least two cemeteries. An additional \$789 million would be marked to start minor construction projects, and \$80 million would go toward building VA's zero emission vehicle fleet.

With the release of President Joe Biden's budget, Congress will begin deliberations over funding and develop its own spending package, with a goal to complete it by Oct. 1.

MOAA MAGAZINE ADVOCACY TEAR OUT LETTERS

The April issue had four tear out letters for consideration to complete and send to elected officials. This is to request support for the Star Act (S. 344 and H.R. 1282) that would enable more than 50,300 combat –injured veterans to receive both their vested longevity pay and VA disability.



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INSIDE THIS ISSUE:
PRESIDENT'S COLUMN
DINNER MEETING APRIL 21ST AT MEDIA ROOM
IN MCLANE STADIUM
GUEST SPEAKER – JOHN ALEXANDER
2023 PROPOSED WHITE HOUSE DOD AND VA
BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS
STATE PROPOSITIONS ON MAY 7 BALLOT
MEMORIAM – SHIELA LEDNICKY
LOCAL EVENTS