



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

Volume MMXXIII, Issue III

March 2023

Chapter Website: hotmoaa.org

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Greetings

We are dedicated to improving our status as a premier veteran's organization through increased volunteer and financial support for veterans, veteran dependents, and JROTC/ROTC students. Through our scholarship and grant programs, we help prepare those who will lead in the future. Our donations to local and national veteran support organizations will assist those who are serving, have honorably served our nation and their dependents.

Simply stated, our leadership team's 2023 Chapter/Foundation goals and objectives focus on four areas:

1. Become the recognized leader in supporting uniformed services veterans (active/retired/honorably discharged) and their families in Texas
2. Maintain sound financial status
3. Complete website modernization
4. Apply for and receive MOAA Levels of Excellence Award (chapter), Col. Marvin J. Harris Communications Award (chapter), Leadership Award (member) and Chairman's Award (member)

Only a sound financial organization can achieve these objectives. This January, Bill Hulsey completed an internal review of our financials, both Chapter and Foundation, and concluded that we are financially sound.

Last month, our Board of Directors approved the leadership team's proposed Chapter 2023 budget, which after all expenses are paid, will yield an end of year balance of \$7,220.

Next month, the Board will decide whether or not approve the leadership team's recommended Foundation (Benevolence) Fund 2023 budget.

Aside for volunteerism, our proposal is two-fold:

1. To increase scholarship and grants
2. To increase local and national donations

The leadership team recommends that we increase our scholarship (Goodall and Freedom is not Free) funding from \$10,000 to \$12,000 and our Baylor Air Force ROTC and Army ROTC grants for \$600 each to \$1,000 each. Grants to JROTC remain unchanged.

From 2007-2022, the Foundation's donations to veteran's organizations averaged only \$553 per year. This year, the leadership team proposes to donate \$3,500 to local veteran's organizations and \$3,000 to national veteran's organizations.

If approved, the Foundation budget, after all expenses are paid, will yield an estimated end of year balance of \$11,681. (This excludes our Certificate of Deposit of over \$36,000.) The Board's decision will directly affect if we are recognized as a "premier veteran's organization" in Texas.

I call upon each of **YOU** to help make our fundraising efforts a success through individual donations, by working with the Fundraising Team in soliciting donations from businesses and individuals, and/or volunteering to help at the golf tournament. As of March 1, five members have already donated over \$4,000 to our fundraising effort. Please contact Vince Tobola to donate and for more details on soliciting donations and/or helping at the golf tournament. *Remember, a portion of our Chapter Coin sales go to our fundraising.*

Lastly, let's not forget the sacrifices made since the founding during: Revolutionary War, Civil War, World Wars I & II, Korea, Vietnam, Grenada, Panama, former Yugoslavia, Africa & Mid-East (Somalia, Libya, Iraq, Afghanistan, ISIS, Cold War)

Duty/Honor/Country---Always Serving

v/r

Michael Slavens

Upcoming Events and Information Items

THURSDAY LUNCH MEETING MARCH 16, AT MCLANE STADIUM – PRESIDENT’S SUITE, FIFTH FLOOR, HOSTED BY THE BAYLOR CLUB.

- Enter stadium parking lot thru gate 1, off of MLK Blvd and bear right. Continue on I-35 side to the end of parking lot past the Baylor Club entrance and Founder’s Club entrance and find the last inset doorway near the column;

- There will be a President’s Suite sign above the inset double door entrance located near the white column. There is usually a sidewalk placard against the column with President’s Suite name on it. Go thru the doorway and take the elevator to the fifth floor.

- The numbered spaces starting with rows 1-001, 1-025, 1-045 or 1-064 and up are across from the door entrance. You can park in any numbered space.

LUNCH SCHEDULE

**** 11:00 A.M. Registration and Social Period**

**** 11:35 A.M. Call to Tables**

**** 11:40 A.M. Intro & Announcements.**

**** 11:50 A.M. Lunch**

**** 12:20 P.M Multiple Drawings for Door Prizes**

**** 12:25 P.M. Guest Speaker, Robert Gager, Shepherd’s Heart**

MENU: Tossed salad, artisan bread, Dr. Pepper Pork Loin, Grilled Tilapia, Fiesta Corn, Roasted Asparagus, Fresh Fruit, and Desserts. Fresh Brewed Iced Tea and water will be on the tables.

Please note lunch 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, 9 March, Noon for sign-up.

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

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

MEETING SCHEDULE FOR 2023

- **Apr 20, Thursday, Lunch in President’s Suite at McLane Stadium.** Guest speaker will be Baylor University First Gentleman Brad Livingstone with a presentation, “What Do You See? The incredible stories of history right in front of us.” Also, update from Sidney King, scholarship recipient. **Registration table opens at 11 a.m.**
- **18 May, Thursday, Dinner in Media Room at McLane Stadium.** Guest speaker will be Assistant Police Chief Dennis Kruse of Whitney Police Department talking on self-defense measures. **Registration table opens at 5 p.m.**
- **June 9, Thursday, possible Lunch Meeting in President’s Suite at McLane Stadium.** More information to follow closer to the date on MOAA National attendees.
- **June 10, Saturday morning,** Annual scholarship golf fundraiser tournament will held with registration start 6:45 a.m. and shot-gun start at 8:00 a.m. Location is City of Waco Cottonwood Creek Golf Course, 5200 Bagby Avenue in Waco. Open to the public and all military. More info is on the website at hotmoaa.org.
- **July 20, Thursday, Dinner in Media Room at McLane Stadium.** Proposed dinner meeting will be for presentation of scholarship awardees. **Registration table will open at 5 p.m.**
- **17 August, Thursday, Dinner in Media Room at McLane Stadium,** Guest speaker will be Waco Police Chief Sheryl Victorian. **Registration table will open at 5 p.m.**

HOT CHAPTER BOARD MEETING DATE

The next Board meeting will be held on **Tuesday, March 28, 2023;** 5:00 p.m. at Uncle Dan’s BBQ that is located at 1001 Lake Air Drive.

SAVE THE DATE - 2023 GOLF FUNDRAISER

– This event supports our scholarship and veteran’s support programs. This is a **HOT MOAA team** event and volunteers are needed to assist with contacting businesses and at the event! Please be ready to assist us again in making our 2023 fundraiser a huge success by making a donation, soliciting business support and/or volunteering. Please contact Vince Tobola to learn how you can help.

2023 CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP DUES

Chapter member dues are still \$25 for renewing members. 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 Bill Porter, 254-495-5601 or Vince Tobola, 254-709-5795 with prospect names.

Reminder that our website, hotmoaa.org, does have the 2023 chapter membership application form and plus copies of newsletters. Newsletters are sent to members monthly, by e-mail or regular mail.

Dues for the chapter and MOAA National are separate from each other.

There is a MOAA membership form at the chapter website: hotmoaa.org. **Basic membership is free** and the form shows fees for annual and life memberships.

Note: MOAA National is the nation's largest and most influential association of military officers. It is an independent, nonprofit, politically nonpartisan organization.

The web address for MOAA's online legislative Take Action Center is www.moaa.org/takeaction.

FEBRUARY MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

HOT MOAA Presidential Pin Award



Left to right, Harold Rafuse received the Past President Pin from President Michael Slavens. This was in recognition for his past service as a chapter president and for his continuing support to and participation in the chapter.

Guest Speaker

The guest speaker for the Feb 16th luncheon was Missy Gentsch with assistance by her spouse, Frank Gentsch. They gave a presentation on her late father, Colonel Robert Howard, USA (ret), who was a Medal of Honor recipient for service during the Vietnam War in the Special Forces.

The photo below shows his photo. Starting from left to right, you have Wally Burns (Special Forces), Beau Crosby assisting with presentation, John Householder (Special Forces), Missy Gentsch (speaker and daughter of Colonel Howard), Jon Ker (Special Forces), Lee Torbett (Special Forces) with service dog, Buddy and Frank Gentsch (assisting speaker).



MARCH SPECIAL DAY RECOGNITION

Birthdays: Liz Arend, Doug Baldwin, Bill Bauer, Linda Beu, Roland Duty, Michael Flynn, George Holmes, John Jacques, William Rogers, Al West and James Wilson.

Anniversaries: George and Christine Brinegar, Roland and Mary Duty, Randy and Diana Ramey, and James and Shirley Wilson.

CONGRATUATIONS TO ALL





NEW MEMBERS

Norm and Linda Beu met at Coe College in Cedar Rapids, Iowa in 1960. She was from Iowa, and he was from west of Chicago. They married in 1964. Norm was commissioned through the AFROTC program at Coe, and attended the aircraft maintenance officers' school. He spent over five years in the Strategic Air Command drone reconnaissance program. Most subsequent assignments were at SAC bases with KC-135, EC-135, B-52 and FB-111 aircraft. He had two deployments to the U-2 and a drone Operating Location at Bien Hoa AB, SVN, and later had a PCS to Udorn RTAFB, Thailand where they supported F-4 and RF-4 aircraft. Linda and Norm lived in 10 states, plus tours at Wiesbaden, GE and Ramstein AB, GE. Norm retired as the Logistics Group Commander at RAF Mildenhall, UK in September, 1992. Linda and Norm have three daughters. Linda taught in various elementary schools and was active in Family Services. Since retirement Norm worked at the University of Northern Iowa. Norm was active in the Air Force Association, where he was Iowa State President for two years, and was the Grundy County Executive Director for the VA Commission for eight years. Norm was President of the International Airstream RV Club. They own the local laundromat in Reinbeck Iowa, and he drives a school bus to athletic events. They live in Hillsboro, Texas during the winter months.

CHAPTER SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Information on the 2023 Chapter Scholarship Program is now available on the chapter website, hotmoaa.org.

FREE LEGAL ADVICE FOR VETERANS

There will be a free veteran's clinic by Baylor Law on Friday, March 17, 2:00 – 5:00 p.m. at the Heart of Texas Veterans One Stop, 2010 La Salle Ave, Waco, TX.

This is by **Appointment Only**, phone 254-710-4244, or e-mail: LegalClinics@baylor.edu. Contact for the program is Joshua Borderud.

VA AND HOUSING THE HOMELESS

Veterans Affairs staffers helped more than 40,000 veterans in to permanent housing last year, surpassing the department's goal and establishing new pathways to help individuals in need, officials announced at end of January.

CONCURRENT RECEIPT BILL

The Major Richard Star Act, legislation which would end an unfair pay offset faced by more than 50,000 combat-injured veterans, was reintroduced in the Senate on Feb. 9 and already has amassed 49 co-sponsors. S-344 introduced by Sens. Jon Tester (D-Mont.) and Mike Crapo (R-Idaho), would allow medically retired, combat-injured veterans with less than 20 years of service to receive full DoD retirement pay and VA disability pay, instead of losing hundreds of dollars a month to cover the current unfair offset. Last year, over two-thirds of Congress supported the Star Act, with 67 Senate co-sponsors and another 336 in the House. The House will reintroduce its bill soon; advocates hope to build on last year's support and grow the number of original co-sponsors, creating a path to passage as standalone legislation or as part of the annual National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA).

Coalition members met with lawmakers and staffs throughout day on February 28 and were joined by Sen. John Tester (D-Mont.) and Rep. Gus Bilirakis (R-Fla.) in a same day press conference calling for swift passage of the bipartisan legislation, which would allow combat-injured veterans to receive both vested longevity pay and VA disability. The retirement pay of these veterans is currently subject to an offset, reduced by a dollar for every dollar of VA disability received. The bill is named after Maj. Richard Star, an Army combat engineer who died of cancer in 2021. He dedicated his final months of life to calling for a change to this unjust law.

VIETNAM WAR VETERANS DAY

March 29 this year marks the 50th anniversary of U.S. combat troops returning home from the Vietnam War. The date is now known as National Vietnam War Veterans Day.

The day was first proclaimed by President Obama in 2012. President Trump subsequently signed it into law in 2017.

It is a day to thank and honor all veterans who served in the war. The legislation, The Vietnam War Veterans Recognition Act of 2017 (P.L. 115-15), annually recognizes March 29 as National Vietnam War Veterans Day. It also amended Title 4 of the U.S. Code to “encourage the display of” the U.S. flag on March 29.

20 YEARS LATER AND IRAQ INVASION

The Iraq War began on March 19, 2003, when U.S. planes and warships based in the Persian Gulf hit targets within Iraq with a barrage of Tomahawk missiles. The next day, the ground phase of the war started when the first of 160,000 U.S. troops entered Iraq.

The invasion was swift and successful. During the first week, Marines encountered heavy resistance near the southern Iraq city of Nasirayah, which the Marines called “the wild west”. By April 0, after a six-day battle, U.S. forces had captured Iraq’s capital of Baghdad. On May 1, President George W. Bush declared that the first phase of the war was complete.

TEXAS VETERANS LAND BOARD

The Veterans Land Board has approved an increase for our home loan amount from \$647,200 to \$726,200. Eligible Texas Veterans and Military Members can now apply for VA, FHA or conventional financing using the Veterans Housing Assistance Program (VHAP) and a VLB participating lender.

When used with VA-backed home-buying benefits, Veterans may be eligible for a home loan with no down payment and no private mortgage insurance (PMI).

Find more information about the home loan program and a list of VLB lenders here: <https://s3.glo.texas.gov/vlb/loans/home-loans/> Please give VLB reps a call at 1-800-252-8387 if you have any questions!

GUEST SPEAKER – ROBERT GAGER

Our speaker for March is Robert Gager, CEO of The Shepherd’s Heart, a Central Texas food bank and so much more. The mission of The Shepherd’s Heart is to feed, clothe, empower and advocate for families in need throughout our community, demonstrating to them the love of God. Bob will tell us everything his organization does and how we can become involved; because, together we can make a difference.

VA AND EMERGENCY MENTAL HEALTH

All veterans are now able to access emergency mental health free of charge at any Veterans Affairs medical facility or outside clinic, regardless of whether they are enrolled in department health care services.

Department officials announced the new policy January 13 as part of the nationwide efforts to prevent veteran suicide. According to the latest department data, about 17 veterans a day die by suicide.

The new policy applies to all veterans with any separation status except a dishonorable discharge, regardless of whether they qualify for other VA medical services.

About 18 million veterans are living in America today, but only about half are currently enrolled in veterans health care through the department.

Since 2019, all VA medical facilities have been required to provide same-day access to emergency mental health care to veterans.

MARCH DATES

- Women’s History Month
- March 3, Navy Reserve Birthday
- March 4, Hug a GI Day
- March 5, Seabee Birthday
- March 13, K-9 Veterans Day
- **MARCH 12, 2023 DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME BEGINS**
- March 15, American Legion Birthday
- March 17, St. Patrick’s Day
- March 21, Rosie the Riveter Day
- March 29, Vietnam War Veterans Day

**Heart of Texas Chapter TX07, MOAA
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Address label

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Dr. Harold Rafuse, LtCol, USAF (ret.) (RoseMary) 254-717-8112

ELECTED OFFICIALS

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U.S. Senator Ted Cruz 127A Russell Senate Office Building Washington, D.C. 20510 202-224-5922	300 E. 8 th , Ste 961 Austin, TX 78701
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U.S. Rep. Pete Sessions 2204 Rayburn HOB, Washington, D.C. 20515 202-225-6105.	400 Austin Ave, Suite 302 Waco, TX 76702
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USEFUL NUMBERS

MOAA Capital switchboard hotline 1-800 272-6622

MOAA Membership 1-800 245-8762

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