Volume 52, Issue 4 April 2013

Huntsville Chapter Military Officers Association of America

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dr. Bruce T. Robinson, MAJ, USA, Ret



Hi Everyone –

I am deferring my column to highlight an account of MOAA's meeting with the new Secretary of Defense:

### MOAA SPEAKING OUT TO NEW SECDEF

On March 22, 2013, Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel hosted the start of a two day series of meetings between top Defense and Service officials and leaders of selected military and veteran's organizations, including MOAA President Vice Admiral Ryan, USN (Ret). The Secretary said he made it an early priority to meet with association leaders because, "Your organizations are the last bridge between the all-volunteer force and the rest of society". Hagel particularly highlighted and expressed appreciation for Ryan's open letter to him on personnel and healthcare costs. In turn, VADM Ryan urged Secretary Hagel to seek new opportunities to generate savings through joint delivery of healthcare (rather than higher beneficiary fees) and continue working with VA Secretary Shinseki to ease transition and claims problems. MOAA is pleased at Secretary Hagel's initiative in convening the meeting and his engaging, open dialogue with association leaders. At this first meeting, the new Secretary of Defense gave every indication he "gets it". Time will tell if this is actually the case. VADM Ryan stated, "MOAA's 380,000 members make a difference every day ensuring the needs of America's troops and their families are considered. MOAA's mission is to maintain a strong national defense and ensure our nation keeps its commitments to currently serving, retired, and former members of the uniformed services and their families. MOAA also holds DoD accountable as a good steward of our tax dollars."

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# Time will tell if this is 380,000 members make America's troops and maintain a strong nation commitments to current uniformed services and as a good steward of object of the strong material strong material

Treasurer's Report

Legislative (continued)

Birthdays

### Get Involved!

### REMINDERS

Monthly Membership Meeting: Next meeting Wednesday 24 April 2013, 1100 hours at the Summit Club. Guest speaker is COL Darby, Fox Army Health Clinic.

<u>Auxiliary</u>, WOW Support Group & MOAA <u>Widow's Luncheon</u> are scheduled. See articles inside for dates & times.

<u>Breakfast:</u> Next breakfast is Saturday, 27 April 2013, 0900 hours at the Steak and Shake – Madison Square Mall.

<u>Governing Board:</u> Next meeting Thursday 11 April 2013, 1100 hours at the Summit Club.



# Legislative Corner Lt Col Gerald W. (Jerry) Haynes, USAF-Ret



I guess it might a bit early to get too interested, but the COLA watch is underway for this year and the consumer price Index (CPI) climbed 0.8 % in January 2013 which is an increase 0.2% higher than the increase of January 2012.

SOCIAL SECURITY AND VETERANS' (COLA) BENEFITS

Speaking of COLA, fortunately, the Senate voted to block President Obama's desires to cut benefits for Social Security and disabled veterans. The amendment by Senator Bernie Sanders (Independent-VT) put the Senate on record against changing how cost-of-living (COLA) increases are calculated in a way that would result in significant cuts. Senator Sanders said, "The time has come for the Senate to send a very loud and clear message to the American people: We will not balance the budget on the backs of disabled veterans who have lost arms, their legs, and even their eyesight defending our country." The amendment opposed switching from the current method of measuring inflation to a so-called "chained consumer price index." The White House favored this change in CPI as part of what they call a "grand bargain" that President Obama is hoping to reach with the House of Representatives. The proposed change would affect 3.2 million veterans who are receiving disability compensation benefits from the VA. Veterans who started receiving disability benefits at age 30 would have their benefits reduced by \$1,425 at age 45, \$2,341 at age 55, and \$3,231 at age 65. Benefits for more than 350,000 surviving spouses and children who lost a loved one in battle action would also have been cut by this plan. Of particular interest to this audience, this chained CPI would also cut Social Security benefits for average senior citizens who are 65 by more than \$650 a year by the time they are 75 years old, and by more than \$1,000 a year once they reach 85.

### SEQUESTRATION:

With Sequestration in place, the general planning had been that for Government employees would work a 20% reduced schedule (and pay) until 176 hours less have been worked in this fiscal year. That would have begun soon but as of this writing, and with Congressional budget discussions (and a continuing resolution for the remainder of the FY) literally underway, the usual uncertainty has again taken hold. With "furlough" notices requiring 30 days, and with the DoD delaying their dispatch, it appears that whatever the impact will be, it will likely not begin before the early part of May. What, if any, impact this may have on those of us still working via contract, varies among contracts and companies and is yet to be seen, especially with the continuing uncertainty in Washington, DC.

SELECTED MOAA LEGISLATIVE GOALS FOR 2013 Some MOAA's Legislative Goals set for 2013 include:

Continued on page 12

### 2013-2014 GOVERNING BOARD

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

President: MAJ Bruce T. Robinson USA-Ret, 256-450-2252, brobinso@mitre.org

1st Vice President: COL Norb Patla, USA-Ret, 256-890-3340, npatla@mitre.org

2nd Vice President: Lt Col Charles T. Clements, USAF-Ret, 256-450-3610, <a href="mailto:clements@mda.mil">charles.clements@mda.mil</a>

Secretary: Col Don Kimminau, USAF-Ret, 256-489-5880, don.kimminau@gmail.com

Treasurer: CAPT Richard C. West, USN-Ret, 256-776-6901, rick675@hughes.net

Army Representative: LTC Amo Hoerle, USA-Ret, 256-837-6253, arhoerle@mediacombb.net

Navy Representative: LCDR Harold F. Swanson, USN-Ret, 256-527-6217, <a href="https://halaurel@att.net">halaurel@att.net</a>

Air Force Representative: Col Edward L. Uher, USAF-Ret, 256-882-6824,  $\underline{biged992K@aol.com}$ 

Immediate Past President: COL Harold J. Hicks, USA-Ret, 256-233-3548, halppat@aol.com

Second Past President: Maj Glenn S. Crawley, USAF-Ret, 256-883-2323, <a href="mailto:glenncrawley@comcast.net">glenncrawley@comcast.net</a>

### STANDING COMMITTEES

Membership: Vacant

Programs: CDR John Inman, USN-Ret, 256-425-8802, <a href="mailto:inman331@msn.com">inman331@msn.com</a>

Legislative Affairs: Lt Col Gerald Haynes, USAF-Ret, 256-882-7857, jerry.haynes@irtc-hq.com

Personal Affairs: COL Bill Stevenson, USA-Ret, 256-424-1334, <a href="mailto:mrbill5779@comcast.net">mrbill5779@comcast.net</a>

Public Affairs (Publicity): CH (COL) Danny W. Burttram, USA-Ret, 256-651-6378, <a href="mailto:dburttram198@gmail.com">dburttram198@gmail.com</a>

Chapter Historian: Vacant

Chapter Auxiliary & Hospitality: Mrs. Carrie Hightower, 256-882-3992

Finance (Budget): CDR Robert Rolf, USN-Ret, 256-206-6164, rrolf@att net

Constitution and By-Laws: Maj Glenn S. Crawley, USAF-Ret, 256-883-2323, <a href="mailto:glenncrawley@comcast.net">glenncrawley@comcast.net</a>

Audit: MAJ Robert C. Szeremi, USA-Ret, 256-883-5127,

Chapter Chaplain: CH (LTC) Bert E. Wiggers, AUS-Ret, 256-617-0055, <a href="mailto:chbuig@mediacombb.net">chbuig@mediacombb.net</a>

Commissary & Post Exchange: CW4 William W. Wright, AUS-Ret, 256-883-4456, www33@knology.net

FAHC Liaison: Col Edward L. Uher, USAF-Ret, 256-882-6824,

Golf: Vacant

ROTC: Lt Col Charles Clements, USAF-Ret, 256-450-3610, charles.clements@mda.mil

TOPS: MAJ Bruce T. Robinson, USA-Ret, 256-450-2252, brobinso@mitre.org

THE SENTINEL Editor: MAJ Bruce T. Robinson, USA-Ret, 256-450-2252, <a href="mailto:brobinso@mitre.org">brobinso@mitre.org</a>

### Life Membership Trust

MAJ Robert C. Szeremi, USA-Ret, 256-883-5127, szeremi@comcast.net (June 2014)

CAPT William L. Howard, USN-Ret, 256-881-3168, wlhoward @juno.com (March 2013)

CW3 William C. Billingsley, USA-Ret, 881-0513, bill.billingsley@sparta.com (March 2013)



### X / Commissary CW4 William W. Wright, AUS-Ret





### **EXCHANGE** (Formerly the PX)

Keith Sweat is coming on April!!! Oh! You've never heard of him either?! I explained that I am a few weeks short of eighty. Keith Sweat is a BIG Rhythm and Blues star. He will be here 3 April for a book signing. He will be sitting in the Exchange entrance and there will be a display of his books which are for sale .....of course.

There will be direct sales of furniture in the parking lot with a LARGE tent sale from 12 - 30 April. We have a lot of furniture from previous sales in our storage area just in case!

The Exchange will repeat last year's Dollar Days and there will be a LOT of things priced at a dollar from 19 to 25 April. I have things in the kitchen and on the patio from previous dollar sales.

The Exchange will have a Mother's Day Sale from 26 April to 2 May. Some of my friends used to stop in to visit Mom if they were travelling anywhere across the US even slightly close to Iowa. We (three boys) would pry a window open on the first floor and yell upstairs with our name (There was only one key and they don't make those old keys anymore!) She was a War Widow and still raised three boys with NO jail time and we all graduated from college.

Big Deal! You can get \$2.00 off any Salads\$4.00 or more on Wednesday at Anthony's, Burger King, and Charlie's. This is Ongoing! Burger King has DEALS!! Each weekday (M-F) until 30 November there will be a different deal each day.

Continued on page 8

### **Need Addresses**

We have lost track of the above members. If you know their whereabouts, please have them contact Chris Downing at 256-828-9740 to update their addresses.

### Concerns

This month the following people were reported as being ill or recuperating and need our support and prayers:

Betty Wilson wife of CWO Jarvis Wilson

Persons to contact are:

Army Representative:
LTC Arno Hoerle
256-837-6253
arhoerle@mediacombb.net

Navy/USMC Representative: LCDR Harold F. Swanson 256-527-6217 halaurel@att.net

Air Force Representative: Col Edward L. Uher 256-882-6824 biged992K@aol.com

# 24 April Membership Meeting Guest Speaker COL William M. Darby - Commander, Fox Army Health Center

COL Darby has served as an Environmental Science Officer at Fort Bragg, and Preventative Medicine Officer for Special Forces Command. He deployed for both Operation Enduring and Iraqi Freedom. COL Darby also served as the Chief of Environmental and Occupational Health Operations for US Army North and coordinated the Army's medical role in Homeland Defense. As such, he deployed as the Task Force surgeon in support of several hurricanes. In addition to speaking on the state of Fox Army Health Center, COL Darby will officiate a "gold bar" ceremony.







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### Carrie's Notes

### Mrs. Carrie Hightower, 256-882-3992 MOAA Auxiliary

Once again our members met at Big Spring Recreation Center for cards on Tuesday March 19<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 AM. Some of us had lunch at the Summit Club afterwards. Our next meeting will be April 16<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 AM. Hope to see you there.

### **WOW Support Group**

On behalf of our group, I would like to extend well wishes and a speedy recovery to three of our members: Jewel Bynum, Mary Gordon and Fran Tyra. We had a poor turnout for our luncheon in March. It's very important to call me to cancel – as late as the morning of the luncheon. Several members were no show. Our luncheon on Thursday April 18<sup>th</sup> will be at Gibson's BBQ, Memorial Parkway South. Reservations are required.



### Fox Army Health Center Col Edward L. Uher, USAF-Ret



### **Changes to Fox Army Health Center Hours of Operation**

Pharmacy hours of operation at Fox Army Health Center will change from 7:30 am - 5 pm to 7:30 am to 4:30 pm, effective April 1, 2013. This change is in response to a Fox Army health Center internal business practice/process review and analysis. The changes to our hours of operation will accomplish two tasks:

- 1. Enable proper pharmacy staffing to ensure safe prescription dispensing throughout the pharmacy hours of operation.
- 2. Align pharmacy operations with the Fox Army Health Center's Patient Centered Medical Home clinic hours of operation.

No changes to current prescription and phone-in-refills processes, or to medications offered are planned at this time.

### **Editor's Note:**

We experienced a problem with our printing and mailing service last month. Our customer service representative resigned her job, and as a result the March issue of *The Sentinel* was not mailed on time. The problem was resolved, and the March issue was mailed out several weeks late. We have a new customer service representative, and this problem should not occur again. Sorry for any inconvenience.



### Chaplain's Corner CH (LTC) Bert Wiggers, AUS-Ret

"Jesus Arose with Power"

"But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here, for he has risen, as he said. Come; see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead, and behold, he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him." (Matthew 28:5-7 ESV)

The power of the risen Christ empowered the early Christians to change the world. Because of their fresh and vital experience with the resurrected Christ, they were able to work miracles in His name. In what sense is that power available to us today? Could it be that we are weak and anemic in our faith because we simply have not surrendered ourselves completely to the risen Christ?

A minister in Birmingham, England, tells how one Saturday afternoon when he was making his final preparation for the Easter Sunday morning message that the truth suddenly gripped him that Jesus was alive. He said that although he had believed this before, it gripped him in a new way. A new world opened to him and his ministry underwent a miraculous change. Do you need this change in your life?

Perhaps we need the faith of the little girl who wrote on her paper, "General Douglas MacArthur, President Eisenhower, and Jesus Christ." Her teacher corrected her by saying, "The first two are fine, but I asked you to list living people." The little girl replied, "O, yes, ma'am I understand. But Jesus Christ is living. He's alive. He rose from the dead." When this fact grips our hearts as it should, we can begin to live in the power of the risen Christ."



MOAA Widow's Luncheon Liz Townsend 256-721-9762

### **12 April 2013**

The MOAA widow's luncheon will be held on Friday, 12 April at the 88 Buffet, 6125 University Drive, Huntsville, AL. Phone 256-971-9870

Ursula Spicer will be our hostess. We will meet at 11:00 AM.

Please call the telephone committee: Fran Tyra, 256-881-6938 for reservations.

### **MEMORIALS**

If you would like to send a memorial contribution to the Huntsville Chapter MOAA, please send the following information along with your check to: Memorials, HCMOAA, P.O. Box 1301, Huntsville, AL 35807

In memory of:

By:

HCMOAA is reporting time spent on volunteer activities to Redstone Arsenal. Please keep track of your volunteer hours throughout the month and report them to Ray Weinberg at 256-885-0089 or ray.kw@juno.com.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS TO HUNTSVILLE CHAPTER MOAA

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>Based on 2011 Member Communications Trend Survey.

X/Commissary – continued from page 3

There will be an Income Tax Relief Day with 20% off on the total food purchase at all facilities of the Food Court (Not Burger King. They are not in the food court.)

Before any rumors start, the Exchange does not foresee any changes due to the Government Furlough!!

### **Commissary**

There will be more Sidewalk Sales in April which are in the covered area along the store front. The items on special will be found at the front of the store, along aisle seven (7) and where marked on the shelf throughout the store.

The commissary is planning to feature a Farmer's Market in the produce section this year. They will have produce from the local area or from the state whenever possible. Some items may already be available from the Southern part of the state.

Certain displays are put up by the supplying organization such as the "Mountain" of Pepsi or the large stack of Macaroni and Cheese 12 packs. These are often good deals but not always. That large stack of Kraft Macaroni and Cheese twelve (12) packs sells for \$13.37 or just over \$1.11 per individual box. The individual boxes on the shelf were 98 cents each last time I looked. The twelve pack is convenient. If you are counting pennies as we do, check on the shelf price.

I talk to people in the aisles. Often they have coupons from other sources such as <a href="www.commissaries.com">www.commissaries.com</a> and from magazines. Some of these coupons are for one dollar off the shelf price. There are also recipes and other very useful information at <a href="www.commissaries.com">www.commissaries.com</a>, such as web site for AF News, Army Times, Navy Times. Explore! As Auntie Mame said in that famous stage play/movie, "Live a little!" I saw it in Chicago in 1959 and they had replaced Rosalind Russell as "Mame."



### February Membership Meeting

Huntsville Mayor Tommy Battle, Chapter President Bruce Robinson, LTC Sam Scruggs, and students from Alabama A & M University



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Active Retire	ed Former Office	r Reserve	NG	Surviving Spouse		
Mailing Address			City	State	Zip Code	
Telephone Num	nher	Fma	nil address			

## **Annual Summer Party**

When: 22 June from 6:00 - 9:30 PM

Where: The Overlook at Redstone

Theme: "Pre 4<sup>th</sup> of July Picnic"

Music: The AMC Band has been requested

### **Membership Statistics**

Total Members: 507 Life Members: 279 Auxiliary Members: 87

New Members: 1 Renewals: 25 Deaths: None

# LEGACY PLANNING



# **Ken Askew, CIC Financial Advisor**

2707 Artie Street, Suite 12, Huntsville, AL, 35805

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# 32 Birthdays in April Happy Birthday!



COL Henry Mattern, USA COL Faison Gibson, USA MAJ Raymond Weinberg, USA LTC Matthew Thome, USA LCDR Thomas Kerr, USN LTC Gwen Lee, USA CW2 Ernest Carrick, USA LTC Stephen Torok, USA COL Harvey Stewart, USA Mrs Josephine Walsh LTG George Stotser, USA LTC Thomas Stapleton, USA LTC Fred Maksimowski Jr., USA COL Kenneth Kawano, USA LTC Kenneth Worsham, USA Mrs Lucy Mize

LTC Albert Reumann, USA COL Henry Brown, USA CWO Bennie Robison, USA CW4 Joseph Costello, USA COL Harold Floody, USA LTC Samual Scruggs, USA LTC Richard Allen, USA Lt Col Jack Hagopian, USAF COL Thomas Mizel, USA Lt Col Edward Gniadek, USAF LTC Tom Lovelady, USA COL Herbert Dixon, USA Mrs Terry Cave COL James Chatfield, USA COL Henry Oldham, USA MAJ George Sibble, USA

### **Scholarships**

The Chapter has instituted an active scholarship program. In conjunction with the Redstone Women's Club, we will issue one scholarship each year to a deserving student.

Please consider making a donation to our program. Contact Norb Patla for details





### **TAPS**

### None this month

Our deepest sympathy to the families of our departed friends

# Treasurer's Report CAPT Richard West, USN

For the Month of February 2013

Beginning Balance \$8603.23 Credits 1214.00 Debits 634.14

Ending Balance \$9183.09





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Convert to the e-mail-only version of this newsletter and increase the funds we allocate for charities. New members automatically receive the e-mail version unless a print copy is requested. To convert to the e-mail version please contact:

brobinso@mitre.org

### Web Page: huntsvillemoaa.org

(Legislative – continued from page 2)

- Protect currently serving and retiree benefits against significant degradation based on sequestration's arbitrary cuts
- Protect funding for commissary/exchange, dependent schools and family support programs
- Avert 27% Medicare/TRICARE payment cut and fix statutory formula to improve access to care
- Protect against disproportional increases in TRICARE fees
- Oppose enrollment fee for TRICARE For Life or curtailment of TFL coverage
- Allow three years of active-duty-level TRICARE coverage for disability retirees/families
- Preserve full-inflation cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs)
- End deduction of VA disability compensation from military retired pay
- End deduction of VA survivor benefits (DIC) from military Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) annuities
- Implement a more equitable military disability retirement system
- Restore VA DIC compensation for qualifying survivors who remarry after age 55
- Authorize survivors to retain a deceased retiree's full final-month retired pay
- Reform the Uniformed Services Former Spouse Protection Act (USFSPA)
- Authorize Space-A travel for 'gray area' Guard-Reserve retirees and qualifying survivors

### **BRAC NEWS**

House lawmakers at a recent hearing voiced solid opposition to another round of base closures proposed by the Pentagon. "I have yet to see any empirical evidence that would provide even the slightest degree of support for another round of BRAC," said Rob Whitman, R-VA, Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee's Readiness Subcommittee.

And, as always, remember this year, let your legislators hear from you personally and directly. It can make a difference!!