

Volume 52, Issue 12
December 2013

Award Winning
Website

Huntsville Chapter
Military Officers Association of America

The Sentinel



Level of Excellence
Five Star Chapter

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE Dr. Bruce T. Robinson, MAJ, USA, Ret



Hi Everyone –

Well, another year has come and gone. It is already December – the weather has cooled off, Christmas lights are going up, and Alabama is poised for another National Championship.

I recently returned from attending the National MOAA Annual Meeting in Colorado Springs, where some key legislative issues were debated. The Senate reached an impasse on the FY 2014 defense authorization bill and won't revisit it again until after they return to Washington on December 9. Support is needed for key amendments on pay, TRICARE, concurrent receipt, the SBP/DIC offset, and more. Additionally, the White House is pushing to cap military pay and increase TRICARE fees. Contact your elected officials now and have your voice heard.

Let me remind you that our Christmas Party is fast approaching on 14 December. The theme is "A Traditional Christmas", and an ensemble from the AMC Band will provide music for your listening and dancing pleasure. It's not too late to sign up – a reservation form is inside.

December also means that it is time for annual members to renew their membership in our award-winning chapter. A renewal form is inside.

We still have a key vacancy on our board for Programs – if any of you are interested in stepping up and helping to keep our meetings interesting and relevant, please let me know.

Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

- Bruce

P.S. I have a new phone number: 256-450-3191

In This Issue

President's Message	1
Legislative Corner	2
Concerns	3
X/Commissary	3
Carrie's Notes	5
Fox Army Health Clinic	5
Chaplain's Corner	7
Widow's Luncheon	7
New Members	7
Fox (continued)	10
Treasurer's Report	11
Birthdays	11
TAPS	11
X/Commissary (continued)	11
Legislative (continued)	12

Get Involved!

REMINDERS

Monthly Membership Meeting: Next meeting is Wednesday 29 January 2014, 1100 hours at the Summit Club. Guest Speaker is Mr. xxxxxxx who will talk on fire safety.

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

Breakfast: Next breakfast is 28 December 2013, 0900 hours at the Steak & Shake Madison Square Mall.

Governing Board: Next meeting is Thursday 12 December 2013, 1100 hours at the Summit Club.



Legislative Corner

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



One of our hottest new topics this month is the Pentagon's request for a plan to close stateside commissaries. Tasked by Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel to find ways to preserve force readiness amid sharply falling budgets, his comptroller and the Joint Staff have asked the Defense Commissary Agency (DeCA) for a plan to close all stateside base grocery stores. This may just be the loudest warning shot yet fired by a department desperate for budget relief, or if stateside commissaries, which are still enormously popular with military families and retirees, are viewed by current military leaders as a costly relic burdening a financially stressed force. But, Under Secretary of Defense Robert Hale, the department's top financial adviser, and Air Force Lt. Gen. Mark F. Ramsay, director of force structure, resources and assessment for the Joint Staff, reportedly have requested the plan in a meeting with military personnel policy and commissary officials.

The subject was briefed to Deputy Defense Secretary Ashton Carter and Adm. James Winnefeld, vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The military resale industry already has reminded Hagel in a letter that on Aug. 7 at Camp Pendleton, Calif., President Obama told Marines that closing commissaries is "not how a great nation should be treating its military and military families." And, in the meantime, First Lady Michelle Obama and the vice president's wife, Jill Biden, have led a nationwide initiative in support of military families, called Joining Forces. While it is hard to imagine them staying silent as action is taken to end prized discounted grocery shopping on base, we need to make our voices heard in defense of this long established benefit. Commissaries rely on taxpayer subsidies of \$1.4 billion a year to operate, but they now face their gravest threat in decades because of the budget sequestration tool formula in the 2011 Budget Control Act, and Congress' failure to replace it with a balanced debt-reduction deal. Military leaders have testified often this year that they can't roll back weapon programs or shrink the force fast enough to absorb — in a balanced way — the \$50 billion a year in cuts demanded from sequestration. So operations, maintenance and modernization dollars are decimated to achieve near-term savings. Training and readiness are plummeting. So in the environment just described, officials say that commissaries have become "ground zero" for deeper cuts. Those dollars are coveted to support other needs such as flying hours, ship streaming days and troop unit rotations to combat training centers. Closing almost 180 stateside stores could free up \$800 million to \$900 million annually, by some estimates.

House armed services subcommittee on military personnel chairman Rep. Joe

Continued on page 12

2013-2014 GOVERNING BOARD

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

President: MAJ Bruce T. Robinson USA-Ret, 256-450-3191, brobinso@mitre.org

1st Vice President: COL Norb Patla, USA-Ret, 256-890-3340, norbpatla@otelco.net

2nd Vice President: Lt Col Charles T. Clements, USAF-Ret, 256-450-3610, charles.clements@mda.mil

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

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

Navy Representative: CW4 Louis J. Kubik, USMC-Ret, 256-859-3054, lkubik@mediacombb.net

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

Immediate Past President: Temporarily Vacant

Second Past President: Maj Glenn S. Crawley, USAF-Ret, 256-883-2323, glenncrawley@comcast.net

STANDING COMMITTEES

Membership: CDR John Inman, USN-Ret, 256-425-8802, inman331@msn.com

Programs: Vacant

Legislative Affairs: Lt Col Gerald Haynes, USAF-Ret, 256-882-7857, jerry15@hiwaay.net

Personal Affairs: COL Bill Stevenson, USA-Ret, 256-424-1334, mrbill5779@comcast.net

Public Affairs (Publicity): CH (COL) Danny W. Burttram, USA-Ret, 256-651-6378, dburtrami98@gmail.com

Chapter Historian: Vacant

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

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

Constitution and By-Laws: Maj Glenn S. Crawley, USAF-Ret, 256-883-2323, glenncrawley@comcast.net

Audit: MAJ Robert C. Szeremi, USA-Ret, 256-883-5127, szeremi@comcast.net

Chapter Chaplain: CH (LTC) Bert E. Wiggers, AUS-Ret, 256-617-0055, chbwig@mediacombb.net

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

FAHCL Liaison: Col Edward L. Uher, USAF-Ret, 256-882-6824, biged992K@aol.com

Golf: CDR John Inman, USN-Ret, 256-425-8802, inman331@msn.com

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, brobinso@mitre.org

Life Membership Trust

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

CH (COL) Danny W. Burttram, USA-Ret, 256-651-6378, dburtrami98@gmail.com (July 2015)

LTC John C. Franks, USA-Ret, 703-489-2701, john.franks@ingenuityinc.net (July 2016)



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



Exchange

There will be an Express Warehouse Sale December 5 -7 from 9 – 5 at the Exchange (The X) Express (near where the gas pumps are). For those wondering what that means, they will put up a tent and sell alcoholic beverages such as whiskey and wines. Keep this away from the minor children in the family. My Dad kept the booze on the top shelf of the pantry (with 12 foot ceilings) when I was 6 with younger brothers. Pulled out drawers make excellent steps. Now that my (non-Military) son has two boys I am advising him to keep the beer and booze locked up! Do NOT do as Dad did! Check on Cyber Monday at Online Only Shop found at MyExchange.com. It is the largest online shopping day each year.

Every week there will be Christmas Sales. Starting each Friday through Christmas, Christmas Eve hours will be 0900 to 1800 (6 PM). The X will be closed on Christmas Day to give a break to the employees who work HARD! The Exchange said to tell all of you Happy Holidays and Merry Christmas (note how politically incorrect I am. It is my Parents fault!)

The Santa Letters are in the store now and 6 December is the “Drop Dead” date to get the in-store Santa Mailbox. I’ve sent mine for my GREAT Grandchildren.

There will be no more adventures of Kai and football in small school Indiana at least until January. It’s not my fault!!

The big red box outside the Exchange Express (where we get gas) has many movie videos for rent. Try something different at Anthony’s Pizza (says Monica), such as the Meatball Sub or the Sub Salads or the Grilled Chicken Pizza Sub or the “Frito Pie.” Don’t forget that every Wednesday there is \$2.00 off Salads.

Commissary

There will be a Secret Santa wandering around the store giving GIFTS. During the 12 days of Christmas, every time somebody wins, they will be

Continued on page 11

Need Addresses

None this month

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:

CPT Albert Castelli
Ms Liz Townsend

Persons to contact are:

Army Representative:

LTC Arno Hoerle

256-837-6253

arhoerle@mediacombb.net

Navy/USMC Representative:

CW4 Louis J. Kubik

256-859-3054

lkubik@mediacombb.net

Air Force Representative:

Col Edward L. Uher

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Phone: 256.520.1771
darrylgoldman@gmail.com
U.S. Army Chaplain (RET)



Carrie's Notes

Mrs. Carrie Hightower, 256-882-3992

MOAA Auxiliary

We are functioning normally once again at full capacity. After our card game at our November meeting, some of our members had lunch at IHOP. For more information please call Ursula Spicer at 256-881-4741. Our next meeting will be on Tuesday, December 17th at 9:30 AM. Have a Merry Christmas.

WOW Support Group

Our members enjoyed a delightful meal at Cheddar's Restaurant on Tuesday, November 22nd. There were eleven ladies present. The next luncheon will be held on Thursday, December 19th at the Summit Club on Redstone Arsenal. Everyone will be called.



Fox Army Health Center

Col Edward L. Uher, USAF-Ret



Say Goodbye to Smoking with Fox Army Health Center Program

It takes a helping hand to kick the habit. While cigarette smoking causes 1 in 5 deaths in the U.S., about 43.8 million people continue to smoke cigarettes, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Fox Army Health Center is working to improve those numbers through the facility's tobacco cessation program, a support system designed specifically for smokers looking to kick the habit.

"We talk about strategies of quitting, coping with withdrawal effects, and we try to incorporate group participation for support," said Nicole Sarabia, a registered nurse with Fox's Wellness Clinic. "The big thing is a lot of people don't utilize the resources that are there or they don't have an adequate support system. The national average is 5 percent success if a smoker doesn't use some sort of program or help, in comparison to a 30 to 40 percent quit rate for those who use some sort of counseling with medication or assistance. Our program is a 45 percent quit rate. If they don't have that assistance it's just very hard to do. There are some people who quit cold turkey, but it is very hard to do that."

Fox's next 12-week tobacco cessation session begins November 5. Classes are held on Tuesdays for five weeks from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The 12-week program includes a pre-program health assessment, the five classroom sessions, three individual follow-up appointments, blood pressure checks at each class, free tobacco cessation medication and a telephone follow-up after the program. The class is open to all Tricare beneficiaries and DoD/DA civilian employees on post. To enroll in a class call 955-8888 ext. 1440/1026. Sessions are held eight times a year.

Continued on next page 10

Summit Club - Holiday Menu



Holiday Dinner

Tossed Salad with Sliced Cucumbers, Cherry Tomatoes and Ranch or House Dressing
Roast Beef Carving Station – London Broil with Mustard Caper Sauce and Petite Party Rolls
Tender Oven Roasted Turkey Breast
Mashed Potatoes with Brown Gravy
Whole Green Beans Almandine
Yeast Rolls & Butter
Ice Water – Coffee – Sweet or Unsweetened Iced Tea
German Chocolate Cake

HUNTSVILLE CHAPTER MOAA CHRISTMAS PARTY

SUMMIT CLUB
SATURDAY EVENING, 14 DECEMBER 2013

COCKTAILS - No Host/Cash Bar - 6:00 pm
President's Remarks and Dinner - 7:00 pm
MUSIC – "Raw Material" - The AMC Show Band
DOOR PRIZES

DRESS: Military Dress Uniform/Coat & Tie for the men - Cocktail Dress/Formal for the ladies

\$20.00 PER PERSON (Includes Dinner, Gratuity and Entertainment)

RESERVATIONS NLT THURSDAY 5 DECEMBER
MAIL THIS FLYER WITH YOUR CHECK TO: HCMOAA Box 1301 Huntsville, AL 35807

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CALL CARRIE HIGHTOWER AT 882-3992.

RESERVE ____ SPACES

NAME TAG INFORMATION - PERSONS IN MY PARTY WILL BE: (PLEASE PRINT)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____



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

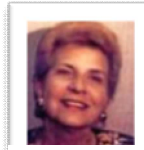
Celebrate His Peace

“Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.” Luke 2:14 (NAB)

In more than a few wars, the warring nations would call a cease-fire for Christmas Day. They would agree that on Christmas Day they wouldn't shoot at each other, drop bombs, etc. However, the day after Christmas they would start war again. As strange as that custom was, in a wonderful way it is a mute testimony to the purpose for which Christ came—to bring peace. That was the message the angels proclaimed.

Today, there are many places in our world where peace is not a word in any person's vocabulary. Yet every Christian knows that there is coming a time when peace will reign on this earth. Each Christmas season, a kind of new hope is born in many hearts. Therefore, though the outlook may be dark, we can look beyond today. The Prince of Peace has come. With Him there is the faith that someday men will “...beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks... Isaiah 2:4, Micah 4:3,” and we shall be at peace.

“These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world.” John 16:33 (NASV)



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

13 December 2013

The MOAA widow's luncheon will be held on Friday, 13 December at the Summit Club on Redstone Arsenal.

Fran Tyra will be our hostess. We will meet at 11:00 AM.

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

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS TO HUNTSVILLE CHAPTER MOAA

MAJ John Norton, USMC

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.

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.



Mine was earned in Okinawa. By my parents.

Robert Griffin III
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P.O. Box 1301
Huntsville, AL 35807-0301

Membership Application or Renewal Confirmation

Yes! I'd like to add my voice to the Huntsville Chapter.											
New		Renewal		Interested in a chapter Life Membership?							
One year \$10.00				Contact us for pricing (based on your age)							
2 years \$20.00											
3 years \$30.00											
Optional hard copy Sentinel \$10.00 per year				Our award-winning newsletter, <i>The Sentinel</i> , is delivered via e-mail							
				If you would like to receive a hard copy through the US Mail instead,							
Total amount enclosed				please include \$10 to help defray the cost of printing and mailing							
First Name		MI		Last Name							
Preferred Name		Birthday		Spouse's Name							
Grade		Branch of Service		MOAA National Membership Number							
Active		Retired		Former Officer		Reserve		NG		Surviving Spouse	
Mailing Address				City				State		Zip Code	
Telephone Number				Email address							

Attention Annual Members

It's not too early to renew your membership for next year – why wait until the last minute

The Chapter has one of, if not the, lowest membership rates in the country at \$10
You can't even get lunch for \$10 these days

You can also renew for multiple years and lock in that low rate

Don't want to worry about renewing ever again - consider becoming a Chapter Life Member –
 contact Robert Szeremi at 256-883-5127 for the details

Fox – continued from page 5

“It’s tough,” Sarabia said of quitting smoking. “If you do have a relapse it doesn’t mean failure, it just may take you a little longer. We have people who come through the program two or three times, and they do a little better each time. Even though the program has the structure with the five classes we try to work with them one-on-one as well.”

The individualized support is one of the reasons many smokers find success through Fox’s program.

“Sometimes they’ve already taken medication before but have never done a structured program,” said Minnetta Williams, chief of wellness and nurse practitioner. “They may think that it’s easier just to take the medication and not come to a class, not realizing that the medication is not the solution. You need the structured class to help get you the support, find out what your triggers are and how to cope with those.”

Whether it’s a cigarette with their morning cup of coffee, or a smoke break to get them through a long workday, participants in the program will learn how to find alternatives for their tobacco habit.

“A huge part of it is habit breaking,” Sarabia said. “They’ll spend the first couple weeks getting over the withdrawal effects like headaches, or maybe some insomnia, and then that goes away and it’s just the routine.”

A popular fad in tobacco cessation seems to be the e-cigarette, Sarabia said, but Fox wellness staff caution smokers against using that as an alternative to smoking regular cigarettes.

“The e-cigarette is really big,” Sarabia said. “It’s a nice electronic cigarette that kind of looks like the real thing, but you don’t have the smoke, just a vapor. It’s not FDA approved. There’s all these new tobacco stores out there that sell these things, and I’ve had more and more of my patients come through the program who say, ‘I’m going to try and quit on the e-cigarette.’ We don’t know what’s in that vapor. They’ll say it’s got this much nicotine in it, but it can vary from product to product. We don’t know much about them because there’s not any studies, there’s not enough research.”

In addition to the program available at Fox, organizations that are interested in having a session done at their location should contact Fox’s Wellness Center. For more information about Fox’s tobacco cessation program, call 955-8888 ext. 1440/1026. 📞



October Meeting – Chapter Auxiliary Liaison
Carrie Hightower receives a certificate of
appreciation signed by VADM Ryan

Membership Statistics

Total Members: 484

Auxiliary Members: 82

Life Members: 261

Members recruited this month: 1

Member deaths this month: 2

Renewals: 6

**40 Birthdays in December
Happy Birthday!**



Ms Esther Gober
 CW3 Donald Wagoner, USA
 MAJ Francis Thonus, USA
 CW3 William Hicks, USA
 COL Thomas Devanney, USA
 CW4 Carl Woida, USA
 Mrs Stella Myers
 LTC Eugene Small, USA
 LTC Kenneth Barnwell, USA
 Lt Col Robert Barnes, USAF
 Mrs Eva Braun
 Mrs Carol Russell
 COL David Wyatt, USA
 CW4 Ronnie Rodgers, USA
 CWO3 Osceola Cloud, USN
 COL Dahl Cento, USA
 MAJ Shepard Newell, USA
 LTC Royal Lewis, USA
 Lt Col Gerald Haynes, USAF
 COL Scott Wilson, USA

COL John Walsh, USA
 Maj William Burke, USAF
 COL William Rehm, USA
 LTC Melvin Jones, USA
 LTC Robert Senn, USA
 COL George Newman, USA
 LTC LaVerne Gehm, USA
 MAJ James Kirsch, USA
 LTC William Katholi, USA
 LTC Thomas Means, USA
 MAJ Bruce Robinson, USA
 LTC Arno Hoerle, USA
 Lt Col Charles Zavadil, USAF
 CAPT Thomas Jones, USN
 Mrs Dalila Carrasquillo
 Mrs Ann Van Wert
 COL Edmund Dowling, USA
 Mrs Edwina Morse
 MAJ Clifton Miller, USA
 LTC Richard Levan, USMC



TAPS

**LTC Jack Hagopian
 COL John Banks**

Our deepest sympathy to the families of our departed friends

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: _____

X / Commissary – continued from page 3

asked to come up to the front and sing a Christmas Carol! So practice up on “Silent Night”, Deck the Halls, Jingle Bells, or whatever favorite you can still remember. I recommend you NOT try “Oh, Christmas Tree” or “Oh Holy Night” unless your memory is better than mine (Did I mention I am over 80?) I know you can do it. I sang in a barbershop quartet with three of you and with three or four others in the chorus.

There will be a cranberry sale both canned and fresh coming up. Ask Sharon, the produce manager. Crazy Cranberry Day you will get to stand in front of the store and sing and get gift cards if selected. As Mr. Phelps said on that old TV show, “Should you choose to accept this assignment, burn this message before reading it!” Turkeys and Hams are in the store since before Thanksgiving as well as LARGE stacks of mushroom soup and other essentials. As Tiny Tim said, “Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.” 🍷

**Treasurer’s Report
 CAPT Richard West, USN**

For the Month of October 2013

Beginning Balance	\$9515.25
Credits	1147.68
Debits	586.94
<hr/>	
Ending Balance	\$10075.99





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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 3

Wilson, R-S.C., asked DeCA Director Joseph H. Jeu about a directive the agency got from defense leaders in February ordering an independent study to cut commissary costs up to 28 percent. Wilson promises to defend the benefit and asked when Congress could see the study. **This is an indication that there is still some interest (though we sometimes have reason to wonder) in at least some part to keep the promises made to the troops through the years of support in return for our dedication and selflessness offered in defending our freedoms.**

Thomas T. Gordy, president of the Armed Forces Marketing Council, which represents brokers doing business with military stores, testified that his group was encouraged over the summer to hear that the department was considering cuts for DeCA lower than 28 percent. “However,” he said, “in recent weeks we understand the Joint Staff has asked DeCA to look at cutting its budget 33 to 66 percent.” He revealed three ideas DeCA weighed in recent months that would lower patron savings but preserve stateside stores. One would double the patron surcharge, from 5 percent to 10 percent of the cost of goods sold. A second would increase commissary prices worldwide by 2 percent to 3 percent, enough to cover agency costs for shipping goods to overseas stores. And a third, referred to as “enhanced commissary” model that would allow stores to sell wine, beer and health and beauty products at a profit, to offset the cost of store operations. Critics worry this one could endanger base exchanges, which operate for profit. Some exchange profits fund morale, welfare and recreational facilities on bases. 🇺🇸