

Volume 53, Issue 2
February 2014

**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 –

At our last board meeting, the officers decided to conduct an evening membership meeting (or two) in 2014. This will allow members who work and cannot get away at lunch a chance to attend, as well as provide some variety in the menu – not that there is anything wrong with the German buffet. This evening meeting will be held in March, and COL Barry Wright, the MOAA National Director of Council and Chapter Affairs, is flying in from Washington to join us. We ask that you make reservations in advance – the details are on page 6.

One of our members recently had her purse stolen. In the aftermath, she had a difficult time replacing identification, credit cards and other important documents because she was not sure of the entire contents of her purse. It is a good idea to make a copy of all the important items in your wallet or purse, with associated contact phone numbers, so that if it is ever lost or stolen you will know what needs to be replaced and credit card companies can be alerted.

We had a record turn-out for our January breakfast – 21 members and guests came out to the Steak & Shake on a cold Saturday morning for good food and fellowship. If you have not been to a breakfast yet, plan to do so in February.

Finally, we still have some open committee positions that need to be filled:

- Programs – responsible for securing interesting and informative guest speakers for our meetings
- Newsletter Editor – responsible for producing our informative newsletter, *The Sentinel*, each month and getting it distributed to the members
- Historian – responsible for maintaining our chapter's history through the archiving of relevant documents and records

- Bruce

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Get Involved!

REMINDERS

Monthly Membership Meeting: Next meeting is Wednesday 26 February 2014, 1100 hours at the Summit Club. Guest Speaker is Dr. Sarah Jacobs, who will talk about wellness.

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

Breakfast: Next breakfast is 22 February 2014, 0900 hours at the Steak & Shake Madison Square Mall.

Governing Board: Next meeting is Thursday 13 February 2014, 1100 hours at the Summit Club.



Legislative Corner

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



This month we take a look at the latest “uniform” policy change.

The Pentagon has relaxed its rules governing what “religious” apparel and facial hair troops can wear or maintain while in uniform. This includes in some cases, permitting tattoos, body piercings and other religious items. The Defense Department, on 22 January 2014, issued the changes as part of its changing approach to making religious accommodations. The new policy will allow service members to sport different kinds of religious garb and hairstyles so long as they don’t have an “adverse effect on military readiness, mission accomplishment, unit cohesion, and good order and discipline.” Immediate commanders will be allowed to grant accommodations to service members in some cases but in others they will have to be approved at a higher level. The changes create several new categories, besides clothing, of religion-based features that can be displayed by troops. In fact, they now include facial hair, such as beards, and religious tattoos and piercings. The pentagon did stress that religious apparel that “impairs” the safe operation of weapons, poses safety hazards to others, or interferes with special equipment like helmets or flak jackets won’t be permitted. A DoD spokesman says that the Department places a high value on rights of members of the Military Services to observe the tenets of their respective religions and the rights of others to their own religious beliefs, including the right to hold no beliefs.” Each individual service member has to re-apply for new permission at each new assignment, transfer of duty stations, and for each deployment.

While this initially appeared to be a Pentagon policy change, it was subsequently reported to have been directed by Congress. What do you think?

Offset Sequestration Cuts by Trimming Social Security and Reducing COLA adjustments?

Two House lawmakers are putting forth legislation to ease sequestration cuts for defense by trimming Social Security benefits and boosting some Medicare premiums. The bill by these two representatives would in part, alter how cost of living adjustments are determined for Social Security in order to offset defense cuts for 2014 and 2015. The idea is this would bring the deficit \$200 billion below its current baseline. There was a similar situation with the country's budget nineteen years ago when the military took a pay cut and Congress then gave themselves a pay raise. It's time for all real Americans to begin voting for changes in the selection of Congressional Representatives. Out with the old and in with the NEW. (How about all current and retired Congress personnel take a reduction in pay and retirement?)

This recent passage of the Bipartisan Budget Act (BBA) was trumpeted as a bipartisan, two-year, sequestration-alleviating budget deal. But, in reality,

Continued on page 10

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@oteco.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

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

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

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

STANDING COMMITTEES

Membership: CDR John Inman, USN-Ret, 256-425-8022, 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, dburttram198@gmail.com

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, glennscrawley@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@mediacommbb.net

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

FAHCLiaison: 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, dburttram198@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

I have been driving by the Exchange Food Court and snack food area plus self-serve gas pumps just off Martin Road and next to the Redstone Arsenal Credit Union and spying! It has 24 hour self serve gas pumps already in service, a Subway store in the food court and snack foods. There will also be flowers. I bought gas and a couple snacks January 13 but missed the Grand Opening because I didn't know about it. That's my excuse and I'm sticking to it! It will be open 6 to 6 Monday thru Friday. In Military time that is 0600 to 1800! What a great improvement for those who work/drive along that corridor!

The Exchange will be remodeling the whole store and the Mall right up to the doors of the Commissary. There will be a new mall flooring of a stone-like material and a new façade on the building right up to the commissary. There will be expanded restrooms and other things to "Improve the Quality of Life." Darn! Now I will have to upgrade ours at home! New Brands will be featured such as Calvin Klein. The brands customers have been looking for will start Feb 17. All this will be finished by the end of September but it will be done in phases. This will start with the Outdoor Living and the Food Court bit by bit to not inconvenience customers (too much). The food court will replace the Pizza outlet with Subway. My wife and I have been faithful attendees at Subways around town but will transfer our allegiance to the Food Court. No services will be closed.

A huge assortment of Valentine Candies is already in the store with brands such as Lindt. I looked carefully at each box and will get the one with the candies I like since my wife will only eat one or two!

Commissary

The Super Bowl displays are up as you come in the commissary and around the store. I have held the opinion for over 70 years that it is not a

Continued on page 6

Need Addresses

Mrs. Ann L Mitchell
COL Christopher Murphy

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:

Mrs. Ursula Spicer

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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Carrie's Notes

Mrs. Carrie Hightower, 256-882-3992

MOAA Auxiliary

In spite of extremely cold weather, a few auxiliary members showed up for cards and lunch on Tuesday, January 21st. Our next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 18th at 9:30 AM. One of our lifetime members, Lee Barnes, has moved to Mountain Brook, AL. We will miss her.

WOW Support Group

Ten members were present for our luncheon at the Cracker Barrel restaurant in January. Thank you, ladies, for supporting our group. Our next luncheon will be at the Blue Plate Café, 3210 Governors Drive. I will call everyone for a head count and to give directions.



Fox Army Health Center

Col Edward L. Uher, USAF-Ret



Increased TRICARE Beneficiary Use of Online and Phone Customer Service Leads to End of Walk-in Service as of April 1, 2014

Keeping up with the rapidly increasing number of TRICARE beneficiaries who most often turn to a laptop or cell phone when they have questions, walk in service at the Fox Army Health Center's TRICARE Service Center (TSC) will no longer be available as of April 1, 2014. Find out more at www.tricare.mil/TSC.

Fox Army Health Center patients still have a wide variety of secure, electronic customer service options available through www.tricare.mil. The new "I want to....." feature puts everything beneficiaries want to do online right on the front page of www.tricare.mil.

When walk-in service ends April 1, beneficiaries can obtain personal assistance by calling Humana Military for enrollment and benefit help at 1-800-444-5445. All health care, pharmacy, dental and claims contact information is located at www.tricare.mil/contactus. Beneficiaries can get 24/7 TRICARE benefit information at www.tricare.mil, and make enrollment and primary care manager changes, and more online at www.tricare.mil/enrollment

Rather than driving to an installation TSC, TRICARE beneficiaries can even combine high-tech with low-tech by downloading health care forms online and sending them in the old fashion way, through the U.S. mail – at a cost of less than 50 cents.

Walk-in customer service is also the most expensive possible customer service option. By eliminating walk-in customer service at TSCs, the Department of Defense estimates savings of approximately \$250 million over five years. The change does not affect TRICARE benefits or health care delivery.

X/Commissary – continued from page 3

super bowl game unless Army (or Navy) is in it. BUT, I have always thrown that rule away if Green Bay, Chicago, or the Lions were playing. I have an excess of steaks, etc due to Christmas so we will fire up the grill and grill them. (Who are we playing?)

Look for more Manager Specials in the meat and produce departments. We bought some awesomely good hamburger called Ground Sirloin which is great for grilling but we used in making spaghetti sauce for some friends we had over. We had it with a lettuce and cherry tomato salad we put together from things we got from the commissary produce department. We finished with two flavors of Byers Ice Cream. Wow! The Sentinel takes no responsibility for my spelling or Syntax! 🍷

Huntsville Chapter MOAA Membership Dinner - 26 March 2014

Time: Social Hour (cash bar) 1700-1800
Dinner 1800-1845
Meeting 1845-1930

Place: The Overlook at Redstone

Menu: Mixed salad with choice of dressing
Baked chicken, pot roast, or seasoned pork cutlets (choice of one)
Rice pilaf, garlic mashed potatoes, glazed baby carrots, and green beans
German chocolate sheet cake
Rolls, tea and coffee

Cost: \$20.00 per person for members and their family
\$25.00 per person for non-members and guests

RSVP by 17 March 2014 (with check made out to HCMOAA) to:

CDR Christine Downing
116 Spring Tanner Road
Hazel Green, AL 35750-8483
256-828-9740
csdowning@bellsouth.net

Dress: Business casual

Guest Speaker: COL Barry Wright, USA (Ret)
Director, Council and Chapter Affairs
HQ, Military Officers Association of America

Speaker Topics: Barry will provide a MOAA update, legislative update and speak on the importance of chapter membership



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

The American Moses...

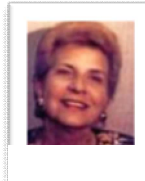
"I will send you [Moses] to Pharaoh that you may bring My people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt." Exodus 3:10

Major General Henry Lee said George Washington was, "First in war, first in peace and first in the hearts of his countrymen." Washington was surely that and more. Emerging as the most significant leader in the founding of the United States, he was the essential man, the American Moses, the Father of the Country. At the three major crossroads in the establishment of the nation, he led our troops to victory in the Revolutionary War, he superintended the Constitutional Convention, and he was unanimously elected as the first President.

How can such greatness be embodied in one man? Washington was surrounded by a host of other courageous leaders, brilliant thinkers, passionate orators, gifted writers, -- Franklin, Jefferson, Patrick Henry, John and Samuel Adams, Hamilton, Madison—almost all of whom were far more educated than he. However, Washington always led the way.

While much has often been made of his physical stature, courage, charisma, energy, vision, and calm demeanor, it was his high moral character that most historical sources commonly cite as the reason for his emergence as the supreme leader. Combine his sterling character and his genius in the area of leadership, and here was a man who could be trusted to lead.

"Judge us O Lord, according to our righteousness and according to our integrity within us." Psalm 7:8



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

14 February 2014

The MOAA widow's luncheon will be held on Friday, 14 February 2014 at the Summit Club on Redstone Arsenal.

Carol Russell 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

CDR David Swindle, USN

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.



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Military Officers Association of America
P.O. Box 1301
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Membership Application or Renewal Confirmation

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Attention Annual Members

A reminder that all annual memberships are renewable at the end of each calendar year. If you have not yet done so, fill out the renewal application above and mail it in with you check for \$10. Or lock the rate in for 2 or 3 years.

What does this fee buy you?

- Twelve electronic copies of our informative newsletter, *The Sentinel*
- Ten membership meetings to socialize with friends and hear informative speakers
- A summer and a Christmas party
- Opportunities to support worthwhile veterans- related causes

You can't get a decent lunch for \$10 these days ... Membership is the best deal in town

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the budget deal was another backroom, eleventh-hour deal rushed through both the House and Senate before the holidays, bypassing the committees of jurisdiction and highlighting a growing military/civilian divide that fails to recognize the necessary sacrifice that comes with 20 years of service. Even though the budget deal would help ease the harmful effects of sequestration for two years for the Pentagon, doing so on the backs of service members who serve our nation for more than two decades is a disgraceful way of doing it.

Fortunately, several other members of Congress--now that they have seen the harmful effect of the change -- have introduced more than 17 bills to repeal some or all of the COLA provision.

But, there are still critics, including many members of the press, who are supporting the COLA cut. They are calling it exceedingly modest to “a military pension plan that is already far more generous than private-sector equivalents.” What has caused these critics to believe the military pension is out of line?

Well, it started when our own uniformed and civilian leaders within the Pentagon created the perfect storm, providing political top cover to slash pay and benefits with their repeated, alarming, and false claims about “exploding” personnel cost growth. The Pentagon’s current rhetoric on exploding personnel growth has emboldened some of those in the Congress to consider making drastic changes to the military benefits, compensation, and retirement system in the name of fiscal responsibility. They are doing this without fully understanding the unintended consequences of their actions, the immediate impact on morale, and subsequent effect on retention.

The press, and the American people and the Congress should not take for granted the sacrifice and service (and retention) of our all-volunteer force by equating it to civilian careers. There is no comparison when you take into account the choices and liberties voluntarily given up by service members. Sustaining the all-volunteer force by equating it to civilian careers. There is no comparison when you take into account the choices and liberties voluntarily given up by service members. Sustaining the all-volunteer force cannot be done on “the

Continued on page 12



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Membership

Welcome CDR John Inman as the Chapter's new Membership Chair

Statistics

Total Members: 488

Auxiliary Members: 82

Life Members: 260

Members recruited this month: 1

Member deaths this month: 2

Renewals: 19

25 Birthdays in February Happy Birthday!



COL Charles Bunnell Sr, USA
COL Don Stotser, USA
MAJ Craig Ailles, USA
LTC Frederick Neidermeyer, USA
CDR Christine Downing, USN
CDR Roger Berg, USN
COL Dean Bekken, USA
LtCol Patricia Schuessler, USAF
Mrs Gwen Parks
MAJ Houston Yarbrough, USA
CW4 Robert McCall, USA
LTC James McWhorter Jr, USA
COL Frederick Bisch, USA

COL Douglas Brouillette, USA
COL George Jobczynski, USA
COL Ricki Sullivan, USA
LTC Ruby Lardent-Davis, USAR
Mrs Irene Lang
Mrs Ouida Ann Turner
COL Charles Perry, USA
COL Norman Holland, USA
Mrs Mary Tyra
CW3 Ernest Williams, USA
LTC Glen Williams, USA
LTC Lowell Twitchell, USA



TAPS

**CDR Edgar Kilborn
MAJ William Parker**

Our deepest sympathy to the
families of our departed friends

Fox Army Health Center Enters Final Phase of HVAC System Renovations

Effective 22 January 2014, the Clinic will be entering phase eight of our HVAC System Repair & Renewal Renovations. This is the final phase of the project which has provided our facility, staff and beneficiaries with better air quality and air flow.

During Phase eight, the Laboratory, and Redstone Dental Clinic will be relocated to the Transition Building, located in the parking lot at the east side of the building. The move will take several days due to the breakdown and reassembly of sensitive equipment involved in this phase. We have taken every step to ensure patient care is not impacted during the course of their initial move.

Signage for both the Laboratory and Redstone Dental Clinic will be populated throughout the facility with instructions on how to access the Transition Building during this 45-60 day period. While a clinic's location may be different during this time, the quality of patient care will remain the same. We apologize for any inconveniences that this work may cause. Thank you for choosing Fox.

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:

Treasurer's Report CAPT Richard West, USN

For the Month of December 2013

Beginning Balance	\$10743.19
Credits	1115.20
Debits	1974.05

Ending Balance	\$9884.34
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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 10

cheap,” and equating the benefit package to those in the civilian workplace devalues and trivializes the very nature of career service in uniform. The men and women in uniform cannot say “No!” when presented with orders they don’t like. They, unlike civilians, are subject to the Uniform Code of Military Justice. And in order to earn the retirement benefit, service members must make it through an ‘up-or-out’ personnel system or potentially face being separated or discharged. The entire military family makes tremendous sacrifices on the road to potential retirement. Military spouses seldom establish their own careers because of frequent and involuntary separations and relocations, and because of frequent moves, military couples rarely spend enough time in one place to gain any equity in a home. Military children, on average, will attend six to eight schools during grades K-12. Their young lives are also peppered with extended separations from their military parent. Along the road to retirement, many will decide the personal sacrifice is too great. And some critics are the first to point out military retirees leave in the 40s or 50s and immediately find gainful employment. But not all military skills translate well into civilian jobs, regardless of what some pundits say. And the reality is two incomes are necessary to reach the standard of living to maintain a household and send their kids to college.

But what is most disturbing is equating military service to the private sector. We’ve seen the service and sacrifice our men and women in uniform and their families have had to endure over the past 12 years of war — and they are far from civilian-like. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Martin Dempsey, USA, stated in a hearing before the House Armed Services Committee in October 2011 that the military retirement program “needs to be fundamentally different than anything you can find in the civilian sector.” **The bottom line is that,**....“until you can adjust the conditions of service for those in uniform to be more ‘civilian-like,’ stop trying to compare the two.

Make sure to let your elected representatives in Washington DC hear from you! 🇺🇸