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Huntsville Chapter
Military Officers Association of America

The Sentinel

Huntsvillemoaa.org



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE Col Gerald C. Maxwell, USAFR



Fellow Members -

April is upon us – which means taxes. Few things I dislike more than taxes. Yet, then I realize that taxes are one of the things that keep our country going. Funding from taxes pays our troops, equips & trains them, supports their families, and rewards their service in retirement – all things that MOAA supports.

Our 2018 Scholarship Fund drive is in full swing! The Golf Committee is working hard on the golf tournament with a goal of exceeding last year's record achievement. What we really need for the fund is your help and, especially, your contributions. So far this year we have only received \$520 in direct contributions. We need to do better and can only do that with the generosity of our members – any amount is would be great: \$10, \$100, and we wouldn't turn down \$1000! Please send donations to the Chapter's P.O. Box and mark your check for the Scholarship Fund. Thank you and remember that these donations are 100% tax deductible.

At the February Membership Meeting, the Chapter approved an "Emeritus" membership status. This status will be bestowed upon annual regular and surviving spouse members who have achieved the age of 90. They will no longer pay dues to the Chapter. The "Emeritus" status will also be bestowed upon LMT members 90 or older. We have many members for whom we do not have a birth year or birth date – the Chapter will be contacting you in the future to try to complete our database. Congratulations to our Emeritus members!

One of our annual events will be upon us shortly – the BBQ at the Tut Fann veterans home. Each year Chapter members volunteer to prepare lunches for and interact with the resident heroes at the home. And get a free BBQ lunch! Mark your calendars for 9 June. More information will follow.

Finally, don't forget we will have no membership meetings in June or July, so you all can enjoy your summer activities. Meetings will resume in August.

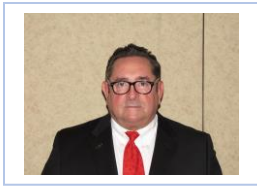
Gerald Maxwell

Get Involved!

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Note: National MOAA and the Huntsville Chapter are non-partisan organizations



Legislative Corner

Lt Col Charles Clements, USAF-Ret



**Take
Action**

→ <http://www.moaa.org/takeaction/>

“All politics is local.”

We are about two months away from the Alabama primary election scheduled for June 5th. The ballot is too extensive to list all the offices and candidates in this article. However, if you go to our website at <http://huntsvillemoaa.org/legislative0.aspx> you will see a detailed list of candidates for Northern Alabama offices as well as state-wide offices. This is a means for you to investigate the candidates for offices that affect you before the mudslinging on TV begins.

Please take time to look at <http://takeaction.moaa.org>. The National Headquarters of MOAA has outlined 10 action items they think are important to active duty force as well as those who have served, including you. On the MOAA webpage each action item is presented in the following format: Who is Affected; The Issue; and The Remedy. In this article I will only list the 10 Action Items. For a complete reading on these action items go to the website listed above.

1. Ensure any TRICARE reform sustains access to top-quality care and avoids disproportional TRICARE fee increases.
2. Sustain military pay comparability with the private sector.
3. Block erosion of compensation and non-pay and quality-of-life benefits.
4. Protect military retirement and COLAs.
5. Sustain wounded warrior programs and expand caregiver support.
6. End financial penalties to disabled servicemembers.
7. End financial penalties to survivors.
8. Ensure the Guard and Reserve system adequately supports requirements for an operational reserve.
9. Recruiting and retention of an all-volunteer force require alignment of spouse and family support programs.
10. Ensure timely access to VA health care and preserve veterans' earned benefits.

There are key bills in the US Congress MOAA thinks are important to

Continued on page 8

2017-2018 GOVERNING BOARD

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President: Col Gerald C. Maxwell, USAFR, 256-606-5282, gerald.c.maxwell@nasa.gov

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STANDING COMMITTEES

Membership: CDR Christine Downing, USN-Ret, 256-828-9740, cdowning@bellsouth.net

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Auxiliary Liaison: Mrs. Jan Camp, 256-464-8622, janetecamp@aol.com

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

Constitution and By-Laws: CAPT Richard C. West, USN-Ret, 256-776-6901, rickw675@att.net

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LIFE MEMBERSHIP TRUST

COL John Fairlamb, USA-Ret, 256-539-0161, fairlambjrf@comcast.net (June 2017)

MAJ Monte C. Washburn, USA-Ret, 256-301-5457, monte.washburn@heartlandits.com (July 2018)

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



PX / Commissary
Col Gerald C. Maxwell, USAFR



Main Exchange

Your main Exchange will have a Grand Opening of its Outdoor Living area on 20 April from 1100 – 1300 at the store's Garden Center. Prizes and food samples will be featured. With spring upon us, it will soon be time for lawn care. Look for mowers of all types to be on sale. And for you BBQ pros, watch for smokers and grills to go on sale as well. In the food court, a new Ice Cream shop is opening – Golden Years, as well as the long awaited Popeyes chicken.

The winter clothes are on clearance, so you can really pick up some good deals. Speaking of clothes, stop in and check out the latest fashion trends for men, women, and children available.

Don't forget to check out the Daily Special on line at <http://shopmyexchange.com> and the Friday Frenzy every Friday! As always shop early for best selection.

Shopette

Your Shopette has newly arrived Rebel Juiced IPA beer from Samuel Adams – and it's on sale! Regularly \$7.50 now \$3.99. For your sweet tooth, also new is Oreo thin bites fudge dipped in regular and coconut cream.

In the wine aisle, Bogle vineyards wines in merlot, chardonnay, and sauvignon blanc are on sale. Reduced from \$12.70 to \$6.99.

Even though St. Patrick's Day is over several of the Irish spirits are still on sale. This includes Jameson Irish whiskey.

In preparation for Cinco de Mayo, Jose Cuervo ready-made margaritas are on sale – flavors included classic margarita, strawberry lime, light, pink lemonade, watermelon, mango, golden, grapefruit-tangerine, and strawberry. If you prefer a Russian twist to the celebration, all Smirnoff flavored vodkas are also on sale.

Commissary

Watch for the Commissary plant sale! They currently have ferns, hydrangeas and potted palms. Coming soon – a wide variety of vegetable plants.

Check out the organic section at the front of the store. Selections include a wide variety of fruits, vegetables and more.

Continued on page 7

Need Addresses

None this month

We have lost track of the above member. 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:

None this month

Persons to contact are:

Army Representative:
COL James D. Treadway
 256-859-1484
jtreadway51@mchsi.com

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

Air Force Representative:
Col Edward L. Uher
 256-882-6824,
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Personal Affairs Officer
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Fox Army Health Center
MAJ Bruce T. Robinson, USA-Ret



Recombinant Zoster (Shingles) Vaccine, RZV: What You Need to Know

Why get vaccinated? Shingles (also called herpes zoster, or just zoster) is a painful skin rash, often with blisters. Shingles is caused by the varicella zoster virus, the same virus that causes chickenpox. After you have chickenpox, the virus stays in your body and can cause shingles later in life.

You can't catch shingles from another person. However, a person who has never had chickenpox (or chickenpox vaccine) could get chickenpox from someone with shingles.

A shingles rash usually appears on one side of the face or body and heals within 2 to 4 weeks. Its main symptom is pain, which can be severe. Other symptoms can include fever, headache, chills, and upset stomach. Very rarely, a shingles infection can lead to pneumonia, hearing problems, blindness, brain inflammation (encephalitis), or death.

For about 1 person in 5, severe pain can continue even long after the rash has cleared up. This long-lasting pain is called post-herpetic neuralgia (PHN).

Shingles is far more common in people 50 years of age and older than in younger people, and the risk increases with age. It is also more common in people whose immune system is weakened because of a disease such as cancer, or by drugs such as steroids or chemotherapy.

At least 1 million people a year in the United States get shingles.

Shingles vaccine (recombinant). Recombinant shingles vaccine was approved by FDA in 2017 for the prevention of shingles. In clinical trials, it was more than 90% effective in preventing shingles. It can also reduce the likelihood of PHN.

Two doses, 2 to 6 months apart, are recommended for **adults 50 and older**.

This vaccine is also recommended for people who have already gotten the live shingles vaccine (Zostavax). There is no live virus in this vaccine.

Some people should not get this vaccine. Tell your vaccine provider if you:

- **Have any severe, life-threatening allergies.** A person who has ever had a life-threatening allergic reaction after a dose of recombinant shingles vaccine or has a severe allergy to any component of this vaccine, may be advised not to be vaccinated. Ask your health care provider if you want information about vaccine components.
- **Are pregnant or breastfeeding.** There is not much information about use of recombinant shingles vaccine in pregnant or nursing women. Your healthcare provider might recommend delaying vaccination.
- **Are not feeling well.** If you have a mild illness, such as a cold, you can probably get the vaccine today. If you are moderately or severely ill, you should probably wait until you recover. Your doctor can advise you.

Continued on next page

Risks of a vaccine reaction. With any medicine, including vaccines, there is a chance of reactions. After recombinant shingles vaccination, a person might experience:

- Pain, redness, soreness, or swelling at the site of the injection
- Headache, muscle aches, fever, shivering, fatigue

In clinical trials, most people got a sore arm with mild or moderate pain after vaccination, and some also had redness and swelling where they got the shot. Some people felt tired, had muscle pain, a headache, shivering, fever, stomach pain, or nausea. About 1 out of 6 people who got recombinant zoster vaccine experienced side effects that prevented them from doing regular activities. Symptoms went away on their own in about 2 to 3 days. Side effects were more common in younger people.

You should still get the second dose of recombinant zoster vaccine even if you had one of these reactions after the first dose.

Other things that could happen after this vaccine:

- People sometimes faint after medical procedures, including vaccination. Sitting or lying down for about 15 minutes can help prevent fainting and injuries caused by a fall. Tell your provider if you feel dizzy or have vision changes or ringing in the ears.
- Some people get shoulder pain that can be more severe and longer-lasting than routine soreness that can follow injections. This happens very rarely.
- Any medication can cause a severe allergic reaction. Such reactions to a vaccine are estimated at about 1 in a million doses and would happen within a few minutes to a few hours after the vaccination.

As with any medicine, there is a very remote chance of a vaccine causing a serious injury or death. The safety of vaccines is always being monitored. For more information, visit: www.cdc.gov/vaccinesafety/

What if there is a serious problem?

What should I look for? Look for anything that concerns you, such as signs of a severe allergic reaction, very high fever, or unusual behavior. Signs of a **severe allergic reaction** can include hives, swelling of the face and throat, difficulty breathing, a fast heartbeat, dizziness, and weakness. These would usually start a few minutes to a few hours after the vaccination.

What should I do? If you think it is a **severe allergic reaction** or other emergency that can't wait, call 9-1-1 and get to the nearest hospital. Otherwise, call your health care provider.

Afterward, the reaction should be reported to the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS). Your doctor should file this report, or you can do it yourself through the VAERS web site at www.vaers.hhs.gov, or by calling 1-800-822-7967. *VAERS does not give medical advice.*

How can I learn more?

- Ask your healthcare provider. He or she can give you the vaccine package insert or suggest other sources of information.
- Call your local or state health department.
- Contact the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) at 1-800-232-4636 or www.cdc.gov/vaccines

The vaccine is available at FAHC to anyone age 50 years and older that has a provider assigned. 



Surviving Spouse's Luncheon

Mrs. Carrie Hightower
256-882-3992

We had a good turnout for our March luncheon. Everyone had a good time.

We will gather on Thursday, 19 April at 11 AM.
This month's restaurant is Ol' Heidelberg, 6125 University Drive, Huntsville, Alabama 35806
Phone is 256-922-0556.

Reservations are a must. Hope to see you there.

Surviving Spouse Corner: Overview of Survivor Payments After a Military Retiree's Death

By: Lt. Col. Shane Ostrom, USAF (Ret), CFP® Program Director, Finance and Benefits Information

When a military service retiree dies, the flurry of payment activity by two federal bureaucracies, who provide no explanation, can be confusing and frustrating to say the least. Here is a breakdown of what happens to the pay of the military survivor:

Arrears of Pay (the last retired pay deposit after the retiree's death)

- Last *month* of retired pay is removed by Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS)
- Retired pay audited
- Recalculated retired pay for the final *days* of life in the last pay month is re-deposited to your account

Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP)

- Paid monthly upon application from the time of death — 90 to 180 days after death; retro pay is applied

Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC)

- Paid upon VA application approval after the servicemember's death; six months to a year
- Retro pay since time of death to point where monthly pay started
- VA notifies DFAS of DIC payments

SBP/DIC Offset

- DIC amount subtracted from SBP amount going forward
- Payment of retro DIC means prior SBP payments must be reduced; SBP/DIC offset is applied to past SBP payments due to retro period of DIC payments
- Overpayment of past SBP recovered by DFAS
- Refund of SBP premiums paid to survivor due to reduced SBP benefit; taxable one-time lump-sum
- Overpayment of retro SBP is subtracted from refund of premium amount; could be payment or debt

Special Survivor Indemnity Allowance (SSIA)

- Payment of monthly SSIA added to SBP payment; helps ease pain of SBP/DIC offset



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

Wanted...

FATHERS like Abraham: "he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord" (Genesis 18:19).

MOTHERS like Hannah: "As long as he (her son) lives he shall be lent to the Lord" (1 Samuel 1:28).

BOYS like Jesus: He returned with his parents to Nazareth and "was subject unto them" (Luke 2:51).

GIRLS like the little maid who told her mistress that God could heal Naaman's leprosy (2 Kings 5:1-3).

BROTHERS like Nehemiah and Hanani who served God together (Nehemiah 7:1, 2).

SISTERS like Mary and Martha, who received Jesus into their home and lives. (Luke 10:38, 39).

PREACHERS like Paul, who "in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling presented the truth in the power of the Spirit" (1 Corinthians 2:3).

SERVANTS OF GOD like Barnabas: "He was a good man, and full of the Holy Spirit and of faith" (ACTS 11:24).

LOVERS OF THE BIBLE like the Bereans: "They received the word (message) with all readiness of mind and searched the Scriptures daily" (Acts 17:11).



Legislative – continued from page 2

you. Let your representatives in DC know what you think of these bills. The webpage like above enables you to review the bill and if you think it is something that should become law, allows you to prepare e-mails or print out letters to your representatives in Congress.

There was a special election set for 27 March 2018 to fill the seat for House of Representative District 21. Press time for this article is a few days before the election is set to be held so you now know the result. This is the seat that opened as the result of the death of Representative Jim Patterson on 2 October last year. Democrat Terry Jones and Republican Rex Reynolds were on the ballot. So, if you live in District 21, I hope you voted. You lucky folks in District 21 will have another chance to vote for one of these men in the June primary election because the special election winner's term ends in January 2019. Messrs. Jones and Reynolds are the only candidates for this seat on the ballot in June. |||

PX/Commissary – continued from page 3

Easter candy abounds at your commissary in the "Holiday" aisle.

Taxes have you down? Find a wide variety of munchies including assorted chips, queso, salsa, Rotel, Velveeta and much more.

For your BBQ aficionado, they have sauces galore. Jack Daniels, Stubbs, Sweet Baby Rays – to name a few.

Headed to the beach? Protect yourself with products from Coppertone, Banana Boat and Hawaiian Tropic. |||

Chapter Happenings



February guest speaker William C McDonald III discusses his book “The Shadow Tiger” about his father’s exploits in China as a member of the Flying Tigers

Fuel Your Body during National Nutrition Month

If you made New Year’s resolutions that are starting to fizzle, don’t despair. Now is the perfect time to assess and adjust your healthy living goals and behaviors. Whether you’re just trying to firm up, eat a more balance diet, or lose weight, the results make a big impact on your overall health. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that more than one-third of adults in the U.S. are obese and that obesity-related conditions are one of the leading causes of preventable deaths.

Check out the [TRICARE monthly tips](#) to discover small changes that will make a big difference during the year. You’ll learn health and wellness tips, including ways to adjust your diet, make food swaps, shop smart and engage in preventive health. You can use your [TRICARE preventive health benefits](#) to improve your health.

Celebrate eating right and take command of your health in 2018! [Learn more](#) about what’s covered under TRICARE.



HCMOAA Treasurer's Report February 2018

Submitted by CAPT Richard C. West, USN (Ret.)

1. The February 2018 Treasurer's Report is presented herein. It will be presented to the membership for approval at the March 2018 Membership meeting.

2. Monthly Summary:

	Operating Funds	Savings	Scholarship Fund
Starting Balance	\$ 6826.59	\$ 7999.35	\$14593.08
Income	\$ 2556.40	\$ 0.18	\$ 300.00
Expenses	\$ 1552.14	\$ 0.00	\$10682.22
Ending Balance	\$ 7830.85	\$ 7999.53	\$ 4210.86

3. Notable income included individual dues, MOAA HQ recruiting incentive, Sentinel advertising, and payments for membership meeting meals.

4. Notable expenses included Surety Bond, office supplies, P.O. Box annual rental, gift basket donation to RSAMCC, and membership meeting meals payment.

5. Chapter savings account activity was limited to interest.

6. Scholarship Fund checking account activity income was USAA sponsorship. Expenses included fundraising classes at Chamber of Commerce, donation check to RSAMCC, office supplies, golf tournament event insurance, and payment for LLC name reservation.

7. The Chapter holds an \$8000 (current value: \$8153.46) Certificate of Deposit with Renasant Bank for reserve funding and advance dues payment protection.

Scholarship Fund

The Chapter has an active scholarship program. In conjunction with the RSA Military & Civilians' Club, we issue scholarships each year to deserving students. Please consider donating to our program. Contact Rick West at rickw675@att.net or 256.776.6901 for details.

Scholarship Fund Donations Received During March 2018

NONE

Total received for March: \$0
Total received FY18 to date: \$520



**WELCOME NEW MEMBERS TO
HUNTSVILLE CHAPTER MOAA**

LTC Steve Bolton, USA

Membership Statistics

Total Members: 384
Regular Members: 317
Surviving Spouses: 67

New this month: 1
Deaths this month: 0
Renewals: 3

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:

Board Member Position Open

We have an opening on the board for a Secretary. The position is currently being filled on an interim basis.

The Secretary's duties mainly are to take minutes at the board and membership meetings to document the proceedings.

If you are interested in serving as Secretary, contact any board member.



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Huntsville Chapter
Military Officers Association of America
P.O. Box 1301
Huntsville, AL 35807



Membership Application or Renewal Confirmation

Yes! I'd like to add my voice to the Huntsville Chapter

<input type="checkbox"/> New	<input type="checkbox"/> One Year	\$10*
<input type="checkbox"/> Renewal	<input type="checkbox"/> Two Years	\$20
	<input type="checkbox"/> Three Years	\$30

If New, how did you hear about us?

☐ MOAA National
☐ Local event
☐ Letter / e-mail from HCMOAA
☐ HCMOAA website
☐ Friend / acquaintance
☐ Other (Please explain _____)

Interested in a Chapter Life Membership
Contact us for pricing (age-based)

*\$5 for New Members joining between 7/1 to 11/1

New Members joining after 11/1 will have membership paid through following calendar year

_____ First Name		_____ MI	_____ Last Name	
_____ Preferred Name		_____ Birthday	_____ Spouse's Name	_____ Period(s) of Active Duty i.e. 1965 – 1990
_____ Grade	_____ Branch of Service		_____ MOAA National Member #	
<input type="checkbox"/> Active	<input type="checkbox"/> Retired	<input type="checkbox"/> NG	<input type="checkbox"/> Former Officer	<input type="checkbox"/> Reserve <input type="checkbox"/> Surviving Spouse
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26 Birthdays in April

LTC Albert D Reumann, USA
COL Henry L Brown, USA
CW4 Joseph J Costello, USA
LCDR Emanuel M Tsikalas, USN
LTC Richard B Allen, USA
Mrs Josephine O Walsh
MAJ Gordon M Brown, USA
COL Herbert M Dixon, USA
Mrs Terry Cave
LtCol David L Dunlap, USAF
1LT William H Redmond, USAR
LTC Kenneth P Worsham, USA
COL Robert M Pastorelli, USA

COL Faison P Gibson, USA
MAJ Raymond Weinberg, USA
CPT Aaron J Page, USA
LCDR Don R Vaden, USN
CPT Stephen E Cecil, USMC
LtCol Edward J Gniade, USAF
LTG George R Stotser, USA
LTC Fred Maksimowski Jr, USA
Mrs Lillian Kawano
COL Michael P Peterman, USA
Mrs Pattie C Chatfield
LTC Samuel Scruggs, USA
Mrs Lucy Mize

If we missed your birthday, it's because we don't have it on file. Please e-mail your birth date to MAJ Bruce Robinson at brucer76@knology.net so it can be included in future newsletters. Thank you.

The Golf Committee Needs You

It's that time again. Initial planning is underway for the 2018 Scholarship Golf Tournament. You don't need to know anything about golf or commit an excessive amount of time – you can volunteer as much or as little as you see fit. The following are some of the ways you can help:

- When you visit a local merchant, ask them if they could donate any goods or services
- Recommend businesses that we can approach to be sponsors
- Spread the word about the tournament to any golfers that you know
- Set aside some time on tournament day to help out at the course – just an hour or two
- Join the golf committee – we meet monthly over lunch at the Redstone golf course



If interested, or to find out more, contact Bruce Robinson, brucer76@knology.net or 256-426-0525



TAPS

*Our deepest sympathy and prayers are extended
to the families and friends of:*

None this month

*Gone but not forgotten for their dedicated support and service to our Country. We will
miss these outstanding Leaders and Patriots.*

Why Did TRICARE for Life Prescription Co-Pays Go Up?

Military members and retirees, including [TRICARE for Life](#) users, are used to slight drug price co-pay increases year over year.

But when fees for 90-day supplies for prescription drugs received through the system's mail-order pharmacy, Express Scripts, went from free to \$7 on Feb. 1, many [TRICARE for Life users said they were blindsided](#). They had been told they would be largely exempt from a series of major TRICARE changes rolled out Jan. 1, including higher co-pays and enrollment fees.

So why were they now being billed for drugs that had been free? The answer is that the [Feb. 1 drug price increases](#) and the [1 January TRICARE changes](#) are entirely unrelated. But TRICARE for Life users still wondered where, exactly, these changes came from.

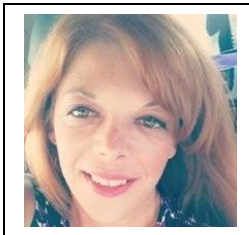
That history lies in the 2018 National Defense Authorization Act, and a section that makes permanent a protection for military survivors against a [measure known as the "widows tax."](#)

That measure required that any money received from the [Survivor Benefit Plan](#) (SBP) by a new widow or widower whose spouse died from a service-related cause be offset dollar-to-dollar by the money he or she could receive from the [Dependency and Indemnity Compensation](#) program. The fix, which had been set to expire this year, reduced the amount of that offset.

Some members of Congress wanted to make that fix permanent. But to do so, they had to find a way to pay for it -- to the tune of about \$1 billion a year.

The funding solution? Raise pharmacy fees for everyone. That pharmacy cost increase, which impacts all TRICARE pharmacy users, was approved in the 2018 National Defense Authorization Act.

As a result, the only places left for beneficiaries to receive medication for free are military treatment facility pharmacies.



Membership Meeting

25 April 2018

1100 – Summit Club

Guest Speaker: Ms. Brandi Medina

Director of Programs & Education, Alzheimer's Association

Brandi started her career in nonprofit while working on her bachelor's degree in Psychology. She worked for 3 years as a Quality Assurance & Training Coordinator at the Hope House Foundation in Virginia. Hope House assisted adults with developmental disabilities in living in their own homes in the community.

She left Hope House to pursue her master's degree in Clinical Psychology, which she received from Old Dominion University in 2008. After graduate school she joined Eastern Virginia Medical School as a Medical Case Manager assisting adults with HIV.

Brandi later decided to move with her husband and daughter back to her home state of Alabama to be closer to family. In 2011 she came on board with the Alzheimer's Association and is now the Director of Programs & Education. This allows her the opportunity to provide education and support to families affected with Alzheimer's disease. Her duties include:

- Providing education, counseling, and referrals to families affected by Alzheimer's
- Delivering educational presentations on Alzheimer's to the public
- Holding annual conferences related to Alzheimer's topics for the community
- Grant writing
- Training support group facilitators and facilitating early stage support group
- Supervising the local office
- Marketing & PR for program events
- State & federal advocacy

Brandi will talk about the basics of the disease, its warning signs, dementia vs. Alzheimer's, how the brain is affected, and what to expect as a result of the disease.

Menu: Fried catfish, pulled BBQ pork, cole slaw, macaroni & cheese, banana pudding, assorted beverages

Cost: \$15 for Chapter members and their guests – pay at the door – cash or check only

RSVP: CDR Christine Downing, 256-828-9740, csdowning@bellsouth.net, NLT 21 April 2018

From the Membership Chairman: A New Membership Category

All of us continue to age as time goes by. And each of us ages differently, but most would say that the aches and pains of getting older aren't such a good deal. Sometimes it can even seem like there are very few benefits of getting older. But now there is good news from your local chapter! The Governing Board looked at our membership roster and determined we have a group of folks who are age 90 or better. And we thought that was cause for celebration!

We proposed a new category within our membership roll and decided to designate it as our "Emeritus" Members. We outlined our proposal to those in attendance at the February membership meeting and the interim change to our Constitution and By-laws was approved. (Final approval and formal inclusion in those documents will be accomplished in the coming months.)

We want to recognize our members in this category and one way we'll do that is to waive all further annual membership dues for anyone who is age 90 or better. This dues waiver will not apply to our older members who are already in the Life Membership Trust – those folks will still be designated as Emeritus Members, but their dues are paid for their lifetime already. This applies to both Regular members and to our Surviving Spouses. This change takes place immediately. If you are 90 or better and have already paid your 2018 annual dues, that will be your last payment! If you have paid beyond 2018, that is also your last payment (no refunds).

In the next few weeks we will be sending out congratulatory letters to our new Emeritus members. There are some folks on our roster for which I don't have a birth year, so I don't know that you are age 90 or better. If you have a question as to whether I have your birth year, please feel free to contact me and supply that information. If you have any questions at all about the Emeritus member category, please contact me. The Governing Board will also be looking at other ways we can recognize our Emeritus members so if you have any suggestions, please contact me or any other Governing Board member. Chris Downing, (256) 828-9740 or at csdowning@bellsouth.net.

Almost 500 Commissary Brand Products Now on Shelves

Introduction of the [commissary](#)'s new brands continues to chug along, with 467 different items currently on shelves stateside, officials said.

Eventually the agency plans to have upwards of 4,000 different in-house brand options on shelves. The products are sold under the Home Base, Freedom's Choice and Top Care. (Do those names make you feel patriotic?)

In the next several months officials plan to introduce a slew of new products, including more cheese options, dressings, honey, a variety of condiments, pie fillings, baking goods, tea and creamers.

Items hit stateside stores first, with OCONUS stores getting the items about six weeks later, Defense Commissary Agency.

These new brands are being produced and stocked under a system that allows the commissary to break from what had been the rule of only selling items at cost plus that nice 5 percent surcharge, and price them above what they are paying for them.

The goal is for the commissary system to make some cash to cover its own costs, instead of requiring an over \$1 billion subsidy from taxpayers to stay in business.

Capacity Concerns at Arlington National Cemetery

Stakeholders took another step forward in deciding what to do about capacity concerns at Arlington National Cemetery. The Military Personnel subcommittee, chaired by Mike Coffman (D-Colo.), [held a hearing](#) in early March to give veterans groups like MOAA a louder voice in the conversation.

The witness' testimonies largely echoed each other, showing the veterans' community is well united on topics of eligibility changes and expansion of the cemetery's physical size.

MOAA members [clearly have indicated](#) pursuing all expansion options is preferable to significantly restricting eligibility to the retiree and veteran populations. Setting aside a set number of plots for those who earned an award of high honor or were killed in action also is seen as an acceptable way to preserve the cemetery for the few who have such distinctions.

Policymakers, however, have not felt the same inclinations as MOAA members thus far. Analysis by the Advisory Committee on Arlington National Cemetery (ACANC) indicates that expansion, despite being the preferred option of many veterans service organizations and military service organizations, simply will not achieve the congressionally recommended goal of having the cemetery remain open “well into the future.”

The executive director of Army National Military Cemeteries, [Karen Durham-Aguilera](#), made it clear at the hearing that eligibility must be restricted in addition to expansion efforts, but that there was no way to serve the entire currently eligible population.

The fact of the matter is that the cemetery is going to be full one day. The earned right of a career servicemember to be buried at Arlington National Cemetery should not be dismissed for a servicemember whose mother and father haven't even been born yet.

Further, who is to say that lands acquired in noncontiguous expansion wouldn't become as exalted as the current location in a century? Time and proper care are what have built the prestige the Arlington we know today.

Predicting that far into the future is tough, to say the least. For all we know, the Pentagon could be gone by then and absorbed into the current cemetery lands. Additionally, given the instability in the world today, there could be another mass casualty conflict, which might fill up the current space regardless of eligibility restrictions. MOAA will continue to push for the expansion of lands, both to adjacent properties and elsewhere around the country.

In the coming weeks, the ACANC will release a second survey to collect more data on the specific changes to eligibility that are acceptable. The survey will be open to all, and anyone with an interest in the topic is encouraged to participate.

If eligibility is going to change, however, it will be exceedingly important to communicate changes and potential remaining burial opportunities to the currently eligible population. No family should have to unexpectedly face a dispute over burial rights. At the very least, the cemetery would need to set up a reservation system for a set number of spaces to provide those with intentions of burial at the cemetery to carry out those end of life plans.

Policymakers have indicated an interest in making a decision toward the end of 2018. The conversations about changes have been open and visible thus far and should continue.

Huntsville Chapter Objectives

- Promote the aims of the national MOAA organization
- Further the legislative and other objectives of MOAA through grassroots activity
- Foster fraternal relationships among retired, active and former officers of the uniformed services
- Maintain liaison and a positive relationship with the Redstone Arsenal Garrison and other military commands in the Northern Alabama area
- Provide a social venue for members to meet periodically and enjoy fellowship with people of similar interests and backgrounds
- Promote and assist worthy community activities
- Provide useful services and information for members and their dependents and survivors
- Provide representation to the Alabama Council of Chapters of MOAA
- Provide representation to the Northern Alabama Veterans and Fraternal Organizations Coalition
- Protect the rights and interests of service retirees and active duty military members in matters of state legislation through the Alabama Council of Chapters

Benefits of Membership

We are the largest of the 13 chapters in Alabama and have about 450 members. We have been recognized by National MOAA for the last four years with Level of Excellence awards. We provide grassroots support for issues that affect us and are active in both the Redstone Arsenal and Madison County communities. Why should you join our chapter? This is what we do, and what's in it for you:

- Partnership with Redstone Arsenal agencies – Fox Army Health Clinic, Army Community Service, MWR, PX/Commissary, Military Retiree Council
- Membership in the North Alabama Veterans and Fraternal Organizations Coalition (NAVFOC) – plugged in to the larger Veterans associations “big picture”
- Recognizing leadership – JROTC/ROTC awards and “gold bar” ceremonies
- Recognizing potential – Scholarship Awards program with the Redstone Arsenal Military and Civilians Club
- Community service/relations – annual Tut Fann Veterans Home BBQ, Memorial Day wreath laying ceremony, Veterans Day parade and events, Retiree Appreciation Day
- Camaraderie – Monthly meetings & breakfasts, parties, golf tournament
- Information – Monthly newsletter, web site, Personal Affairs, guest speakers
- Legislative action – grassroots activities, support for National MOAA agenda
- Venue for getting involved

Please visit our award-winning chapter website at <http://huntsvillemoaa.org> where you can find out more about chapter activities.

Attention Members

One of the best sources of income for the Chapter comes from advertisements like the ones in this newsletter. You are the best resource for identifying potential advertisers. The next time you go out to dinner, or to shop, or to get a haircut, or to get your car fixed – ask the business manager if they would consider advertising. Let them know that the newsletter reaches our 400+ members each month. All they can say is “no”.

If they are interested or desire more information, please let Bruce Robinson know, and he will follow up with them. His contact information is brucer76@knology.net or 256-426-0525.

Important Dates in April

- 1 April – Easter Sunday
- 1 April – April Fool’s Day
- 2 April – Ponce de Leon claims Florida for Spain (1513)
- 3 April – Pony Express service began (1860)
- 4 April – NATO created (1949)
- 4 April – Dr. Martin Luther King assassinated (1968)
- 6 April – First Olympics of the modern era held in Athens (1896)
- 9 April – Civil War ended (1865)
- 10 April – Bataan Death March began (1942)
- 10 April – Nazi concentration camp at Buchenwald liberated (1945)
- 11 April – Civil Rights Act signed into law (1968)
- 11 April – Apollo 13 launched (1970)
- 12 April – Civil War began with shelling of Fort Sumpter (1861)
- 12 April – President Franklin Roosevelt died (1945)
- 12 April – Monthly Board Meeting – Java Café**
- 14 April – Webster published first dictionary (1828)
- 14 April – President Abraham Lincoln shot (1865)
- 14 April – Monthly Breakfast – Royal Rose Diner**
- 15 April – The luxury liner Titanic sank with 2224 persons on board (1912)
- 17 April – Tax Day
- 17 April – Bay of Pigs fiasco (1961)
- 18 April – Doolittle raid on Tokyo (1942)
- 18 April – Midnight Ride of Paul Revere (1775)
- 18 April – Great San Francisco earthquake (1906)
- 19 April – Revolutionary War begins at Lexington (1775)
- 19 April – Branch Davidian compound burns at Waco (1993)
- 21 April – Red Baron Manfred von Richtofen shot down (1918)
- 25 April – Monthly Membership Meeting – Summit Club**
- 26 April – Chernobyl nuclear power plant accident (1986)
- 27-29 April – Panoply of the Arts – Big Spring Park
- 28 April – Mutiny on the Bounty (1789)

