

Volume 58, Issue 10
October 2019



Huntsville Chapter
Military Officers Association of America

The Sentinel

Huntsvillemoaa.org



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE CAPT Richard C. West, USN (Ret.)



Greetings Huntsville Chapter Members –

Welcome to October! The weather is slowly trying to cool down and college football is rolling!

The 2019 Scholarship Fund golf tournament is complete! Due to a record number of players and some very generous sponsors and silent auction bidders, we were able to net just over \$12,000 – approximately \$1,000 more than last year! Again, I really wish to thank the Golf Committee members – both HCMOAA and RSAMCC – who worked so hard over the last many months. I also wish to give a special thanks to those chapter and MCC members that donated volunteer time, funds, and sponsorships!

The September membership meeting was great! Our guest speaker (Rae Barthel from Tut Fann) presented a lot of information regarding the activities at Tut Fann and what individuals and organizations can do to help. Our next membership luncheon is scheduled for Wednesday, October 30th at 1100 at The Summit Club. Our guest speaker will be **Huntsville Mayor Tommy Battle**. This should be a very interesting meeting with plenty of questions! **Get your reservations in early** to CDR Christine Downing. See page 8 for details!

Our venue for this month's breakfast (0900 on October 12th) will again be the City Café Diner on Drake Avenue. Come enjoy some great food and camaraderie!

Also, the flyer for the HCMOAA 2019 Christmas Social is included in this issue! Please send in your reservations early! Last year was our biggest social in a long time and was a great time – let's do even better this year!

Your Governing Board is working on several projects: (1) filling the vacant 2nd Vice President position. This is a very important billet and we need a volunteer! (2) filling the 2020 guest speaker schedule. If you have a suggestion, please let Christine or I know, and (3) staying on top of the plans for RAD 2019.

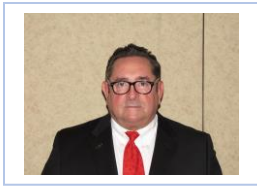
Rick

Member Meeting 30 October Guest Speaker is Tommy Battle – Mayor of Huntsville

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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.”

Changes to Alabama law:

- The new gasoline tax increase of 6 cents per gallon went into effect on 1 September 2019
- The new law aimed at reducing the time spent by drivers in the left lane is now in effect. The Anti-Road Rage Act, passed by lawmakers during the last legislative session, prohibits vehicle from staying in the leftmost lane of the interstate for more than a mile and a half without passing another vehicle. There are exceptions in cases of heavy traffic congestion, inclement weather, road construction, if the driver is preparing to exit from the left lane or if there is an emergency vehicle is on the right shoulder. Drivers of emergency vehicles are exempt. For the first 60 days law enforcement officials will only issue warnings. After that the fine is \$200.
- Everyone traveling in Alabama now must wear a seat belt. Formerly, Alabama’s seat belt law applied only to those in the front seat or minors in the backseat. The new law expands the rule to cover anyone who is riding in the back of the vehicle. The law makes failure to wear a seatbelt a secondary violation which means the officer may issue a ticket if the car has been stopped for another reason.
- Alabama has enacted its own equal pay law and it went into effect on 1 September. The law prohibits employers from paying some employees less than others based on race or gender. People who think they have been paid less due to discrimination may sue employers in either State or Federal courts. They have two years to file a lawsuit. The law applies to both public and private businesses, with no exception for small businesses.

In National matters please go online to <http://huntsvillemoaa.org> under Legislative Affairs for October 2019 and read the article about the Commissary and Exchange merger. We all need to voice our opinion to our representatives on this matter. To facilitate doing this MOAA has provided a preformatted editable message at <http://takeaction.moaa.org/moaa/app/write-a-letter?0&engagementId=502113> which you can click on to communicate with our legislators.

Also, on our website are articles I invite you to read that touch on updates regarding Arlington National Cemetery, US Space Command and Potential changes to income tax.

COLA Watch. The August CPI is 1.5% above the FY 2019 COLA baseline.

2019-2020 GOVERNING BOARD

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

President: CAPT Richard C. West, USN-Ret, 256-776-6901, rickw675@att.net

1st Vice President: CAPT William P. Nash, USN-Ret, (256) 858-1617, p3cdriver@gmail.com

2nd Vice President: Vacant

Secretary: COL Michael C. Barron, USA-Ret, 337-422-8862, m.barron468@gmail.com

Treasurer: Lt Col Charles T. Clements, USAF-Ret, 256-715-1671, ctcbama76@gmail.com

Army Representative: COL James D. Treadway, USA-Ret, 256-859-1484, j.treadway51@mchsi.com

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, biced992K@aol.com

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

Second Past President: Lt Col Charles T. Clements, USAF-Ret, 256-715-1671, ctcbama76@gmail.com

STANDING COMMITTEES

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

Programs: CDR Christine Downing, USN-Ret, 256-828-9740, csdowning@bellsouth.net

Legislative Affairs: Lt Col Charles T. Clements, USAF-Ret, 256-715-1671, ctcbama76@gmail.com

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

Public Affairs (Publicity): CDR John Inman, 256-425-8022, inman331@msn.com

Chapter Historian: Vacant

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

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

Commissary & Post Exchange: Col Gerald C. Maxwell, USAFR, 256-606-5282, gerald.c.maxwell@nasa.gov

FAHC Liaison: MAJ Bruce T. Robinson, USA-Ret, 256-426-0525, brucer76@knology.net

Golf: MAJ Bruce T. Robinson, USA-Ret, 256-426-0525, brucer76@knology.net

ROTC: Vacant

TOPS: MAJ Bruce T. Robinson, USA-Ret, 256-426-0525, brucer76@knology.net

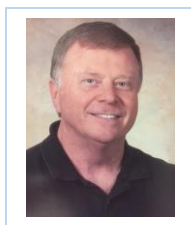
The SENTINEL Editor: MAJ Bruce T. Robinson, USA-Ret, 256-426-0525, brucer76@knology.net

LIFE MEMBERSHIP TRUST

COL John Fairlamb, USA-Ret, 256-539-0161, fairlambjrf@comcast.net (June 2020)

MAJ Monte C. Washburn, USA-Ret, 256-301-5457, monte.washburn@heartlandits.com (July 2021)

LTC John C. Franks, USA-Ret, 703-489-2701, john.franks@ingenuityinc.net (July 2022)



PX / Commissary
Col Gerald C. Maxwell, USAFR



Main Exchange

Columbus Day Specials are on their way, and we are gearing up for Halloween! Stop by your Exchange and shop for your Halloween costumes, décor and entertaining needs. Shop early for best selection.

Use your Military STAR card and enjoy 10% off in the Redstone Exchange Food Court. Download the food apps (Burger King, Subway, and Popeye's) for even more savings at Redstone – and on the go anywhere!

Join us in October for our annual Exchange celebration honoring our Military retiree family. Also, the new AAFES Toy Book should be available in late October—offering toys on sale through December. Be sure to get your copy!

Don't forget to check your Exchange regularly for special Manager sales! Recently all clearance clothes, shoes, and purses were "buy any combination totaling 7 items and get 50% off". Using your STAR card would get you another 10% off! These sales are not usually announced ahead of time so you must stop in to find out.

Speaking of the STAR card, if you haven't got one yet, you should apply. ALL your first day military exchange purchases are at least 10% off, with some 15% off! Also, the guns and ammo section have a sale 4-6 October, and the first day's discount also applies to guns and ammo!

The Starbucks drive through (next to the optical shop) should be up and running soon! The MWR has taken over the mechanics station across from the Shopette. There is supposed to be an Auto Detailing shop going in there soon. My hope was that Firestone would be coming back, but it appears not.

Shopette

Retiree Appreciation Tent Sale Oct 24-26, 2019. Enjoy huge savings on individual and case lot sales. Also stop by to rent a carpet cleaner, or your favorite Red Box movie!

Commissary

Remember for your holiday planning, your Commissary bakery and deli can create meat and cheese trays or/and sandwich trays. Please call 256.876.3517 and provide a two-hour notice. Also, your commissary now takes the Military STAR card.

Continued on page 10

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.

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,
biged992K@aol.com

Personal Affairs Officer
Lt Col Gerald Haynes
256-882-7857
jerry15@hiwaay.net





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Do you know how the Windfall Elimination Provision and the Government Pension Offset may affect the direction of your Social Security?



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Fox Army Health Center
MAJ Bruce T. Robinson, USA-Ret



Diabetes

Self-Management Seminar

Diabetes is a lifelong condition that can lead to serious health problems if left untreated. It is the leading cause of blindness, kidney disease, and amputation. Making healthy food choices, exercise, glucose monitoring and taking medications correctly will help you prevent these complications.



Attend our monthly Diabetes Self-Management Seminar to learn more about diabetes and how to properly manage it.

Where: Fox Army Health Center

When: 3rd Thursday of every month

Time: 0745 – 1600

Audience: Free to anyone with Arsenal access

Contact the Wellness Clinic 256-955-8888 ext 1440

FAHC will be closed on the following dates / times in October:

3 Oct – 1200 to 1600

8 Oct – 1100 to 1300

14 Oct – Closed for Columbus Day

23 Oct – 0730 to 1300



Surviving Spouse's Luncheon

Mrs. Carrie Hightower
256-882-3992

After our summer break, the September luncheon was well-attended.

Our luncheon for Thursday, October 16th, will be held at the Red Lobster, 1818 University Drive, Huntsville. Phone: 256-533-2880.
Everyone will be called.

Surviving Spouse Corner: Reacting to Stress

These eight tips can help you manage and overcome stress:

Stress happens to all of us; no one can escape it. It's how we handle the stressful situation — the fight-or-flight response — that's important. There are many resources and recommendations to manage stress.

It's not a one-size-fits-all list; what works for one person, might not work for you, so consider the following suggestions:

- Determine where the stress is coming from and change what you can.
- Have a toolbox of techniques, such as deep breathing exercises, yoga, or stretching exercises, to use when you find yourself starting to feel anxious. Remove yourself, if possible, from the stressful situation.
- Manage your time well, and spend your spare minutes doing something that brings you joy.
- Preserve your boundaries, especially in the area of your sleep routine. Strive to obtain a minimum of seven hours of sleep each night.
- Practice saying "no," and delegate as necessary.
- Schedule quiet time to relax during your day. It might include moments of reading, praying, or mindful meditation.
- Pick up a pen and a journal and write down your emotions.
- If the stress becomes overwhelming, reach out to a medical professional or a chaplain for assistance.





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

Anger



What does it take to turn a person into a Judas? What motivates someone to betray deep-seated loyalties?

Unresolved anger and resentment for one thing. Consider the story of Earl Pitts, FBI agent turned Soviet spy.

According to Evan Thomas in NEWSWEEK, Pitts was raised on a farm in Missouri and was recognized as a Future Farmer of America. His parents said they disciplined him firmly but fairly. He was a captain in the army who regarded himself as a patriot. Even today he is described by his wife as a "good man." So, what happened?

After getting his law degree and serving as a military policeman for six years, in 1983 Pitts realized a lifelong ambition by going to work for the FBI. In 1987 he was assigned to the New York office, and there his troubles began. He did not see how he could afford to live in the Big Apple on his \$25,000 salary.

Thomas writes, "Morale in the office was poor, and petty cheating on expense accounts was rampant. Burdened with debt from student loans, Pitts had to ask his father for a loan. He felt humiliated. Pitts later told a psychiatrist that he was" overwhelmed by a sense of rage at the FBI."

One morning he came up with the idea of spying for the KGB. That way he could kill two birds with one stone - solve his money problems and get back at his bosses. He later told a psychiatrist, "I was shoved by the bureaucracy, and I shoved back."

Over the next seven years Pitts worked as a Soviet spy and for his services received \$224,000. When he was finally caught and convicted the judge sentenced him to twenty-seven years in prison. At the sentencing the judge asked him point-blank why he had become a traitor. Earl Pitts replied, "I gave in to an unreasonable anger."

Never allow anger to fester nor cause bitterness. Deal with anger as God prescribes.

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:

Membership Statistics

Total Members: 372
Regular Members: 307
Surviving Spouses: 65

New this month: 2
Deaths this month: 0
Renewals: 0

Welcome New Members to Huntsville Chapter MOAA

LTC Jane Sonak, USA
COL Maurice Ottinger, USA

Recruiting

You are our best recruiter. If you have a friend, colleague or co-worker who is eligible to join MOAA, or who already belongs to MOAA National – bring him/her to a Chapter meeting. You would be doing both them and the Chapter a favor.



Membership Meeting
30 October 2019
1100 – Summit Club

Guest Speaker: Mr. Tommy Battle
Mayor – City of Huntsville

Tommy was elected Huntsville's mayor in 2008, defeating a popular three-term incumbent. The values he grew up with shaped a campaign focused on fiscal responsibility, a streamlined government that supported free enterprise, economic development, and education.

He would win re-election in 2012 and 2016, each time receiving more than 80% of the votes.

When it comes to budgets and management, Tommy knows mayors and city officials can't kick the can down the road. Mayors have to roll-up their sleeves and get things done.

Working together with leaders across North Alabama, Tommy has helped to create more than 20,000 new jobs for the region. His collaborative approach to economic development has built partnerships with Blue Origin, Polaris, GE Aviation, and many others, and he led the recruitment effort of Mazda-Toyota to Huntsville. Creating advanced manufacturing jobs with those companies is building an Alabama workforce that is qualified and prepared to lead our state into the 21st Century.

His commitment to schools helped his city build more than \$250 million in new facilities for Huntsville's students. His commitment to education, however, is evident with "Mayor Battle's Book Club," a program which has provided more than 100,000 new reading books to children across the city.

Tommy's wife, Eula, a retired teacher and former Madison County Teacher of the Year, continued her commitment to education by co-founding Free2Teach, a 501c3 non-profit organization that provides free resources to teachers in Madison County's three public school systems. The organization has distributed nearly \$4m in resources to those teachers and their classrooms.

Tommy's fiscally conservative policies have had a greater than \$2.5 billion impact on the local economy, led his city to 11-straight Triple-A credit ratings, created a pay-as-you-go system to build or repair more than \$500m in roads, and delivered balanced budgets every year he's held the office.

Menu: Bratwurst, pork schnitzel, German potato salad, sauerkraut, German chocolate later cake & 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 26 October 2019



HCMOAA Treasurer's Report August 2019

Submitted by Lt Col Charles T. Clements, USAF (Ret.)

1. The August 2019 Treasurer's Report is presented herein. It was reviewed by the Governing Board and forwarded for membership approval at the September 2019 meeting.

2. Monthly Summary:

	Operating Funds	Savings
Starting Balance	\$ 4,814.06	\$ 8,002.94
Income	\$ 1,851.00	\$ 0.20
Expenses	\$ 248.48	\$ 0.00
Ending Balance	\$ 6,416.58	\$ 8,003.14

3. Notable income: Revenue from membership meeting meals, bankcard income (undesignated) associated with the golf tournament, petty cash repayment and dues.

4. Notable expenses: Payments for certificate holders and petty cash.

5. Chapter savings account activity was limited to interest.

6. The Chapter re-invested a Certificate of Deposit (CD) with Wells Fargo Bank on 19 March 2019. The CD was opened for \$8,174.85 and the current balance is \$8,263.38. The funds represented by this CD are 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 September 2019

Anonymous x 4	\$740
Total received for September:	\$740
Total received Oct '18 to date:	\$1760



Be sure to pick up the many coupon books just outside the entrance and check out the organic section on your right as you enter the Commissary. Then as you turn left at the end of the first aisle, check out the discount beef and pork in the small freezers by the meat area - you can sometimes find some real buys! In the middle of the store, find Club Pack Savings and bulk / large items. Near the deli counter & bakery, the small alcove contains clearance items (dented cans and torn boxes).

There is usually a manager's sidewalk sale in conjunction with Columbus Day in October. There's sure to be a commissary sale-a-bration for Retiree Appreciation Day on 25 October. And, your Commissary already has huge selection of candy for Halloween trick-or-treaters

Don't forget, you can connect with your commissary via, Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, and YouTube. 

Keep DEERS Up to Date to Use TRICARE

Being able to use TRICARE depends on you keeping your information up to date in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS). DEERS is a database of active duty and retired service members, their family members, and others who are eligible for TRICARE. TRICARE eligibility shows up in DEERS based on the sponsor's status. It's essential to keep your DEERS record up to date to get timely and effective TRICARE benefits.

Service members are automatically registered in DEERS when they join the military. However, service members have to add their eligible family members in DEERS. Your Social Security number (SSN) and the SSN of each of your covered family members must be included in DEERS for your TRICARE coverage to be accurate.

You should update DEERS anytime you experience a Qualifying Life Event (QLE). A QLE can include marriage, divorce, birth or adoption, or retirement from active duty. Make sure to check that your address, duty status, phone numbers, and email addresses are correct. If you don't, you may miss important information and enrollment deadlines.

Changing your contact information in DEERS is easy, and you have a few options to do so. You can make changes online, by phone, fax, or mail, or in person at an ID card office. Find an office near you using the RAPIDS Site Locator. To add or remove family members, you must visit a local ID card office. To update contact information, choose one of these options:

- **Online:** Log in to [milConnect](#).
- **Phone:** Call the Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC) at 1-800-538-9552 (TTY/TDD: 1-866-363-2883)
- **Fax:** Fax updates to DMDC at 1-800-336-4416
- **Mail:** Mail updates to:

Defense Manpower Data Center Support Office
Attention: COA
400 Gigling Road
Seaside, CA 93955-6771

Remember, only sponsors can add a family member in DEERS. Family members age 18 and older may update their own contact information.

If you want to use TRICARE, take command of your health. Keep your and your family's information up to date in DEERS. Learn more about when and how to update your DEERS information on the TRICARE website.



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



Membership Application or Renewal

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

<input type="checkbox"/> New	<input type="checkbox"/> One Year	\$10*	If New, how did you hear about us? <input type="checkbox"/> MOAA National <input type="checkbox"/> Local event <input type="checkbox"/> Letter / e-mail from HCMOAA <input type="checkbox"/> HCMOAA website <input type="checkbox"/> Friend / acquaintance <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please explain _____)
<input type="checkbox"/> Renewal	<input type="checkbox"/> Two Years	\$20	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Three Years	\$30	
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> Interested in a Chapter Life Membership Contact us for pricing (age-based) </div>			

*New members joining after September 1st will have their 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
_____ Mailing Address		_____ City	_____ State	_____ Zip
_____ Phone Number		_____ E-mail Address		

Attention Annual Members

It is getting time to renew your membership for next year
 The Chapter has one of, if not the, lowest membership rates in the country at \$10

Don't risk getting dropped from the rolls – renew now!

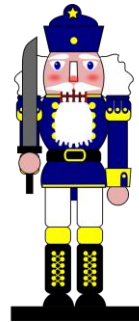
You can also renew for multiple years and lock in that low rate
 Don't know when your membership expires? Contact CDR Chris Downing at
 256-828-9740 or csdowning@bellsouth.net

Don't want to worry about renewing ever again - consider becoming a Chapter Life Member – contact
 COL John Fairlamb at 256-539-0161 or fairlambjrf@comcast.net for the details

Huntsville Chapter MOAA Christmas Party

Holiday Dinner

Sliced honey glazed ham
Oven roasted turkey breast with giblet gravy
Country Style corn bread dressing with giblet gravy
Rice pilaf
Whole green beans almandine
Yeast Rolls & Butter
Ice Water – Coffee
Sweet or Unsweetened Iced Tea
Carrot cake



HUNTSVILLE CHAPTER MOAA CHRISTMAS PARTY

**THE OVERLOOK at THE SUMMIT CLUB
SATURDAY EVENING, 7 DECEMBER 2019**

COCKTAILS - No Host/Cash bar - 5:00 pm

President's Remarks and Dinner - 6:00 pm

DOOR PRIZES

DRESS: Business Casual – khakis/slacks and collared shirts/polo shirts for the men – slacks/skirts and blouses/collared shirts for the ladies – of course you can always dress more formally

\$20.00 PER PERSON (Members & Family) - \$25.00 PER PERSON (Guests)

RSVP by 24 November 2019 (with check made out to HCMOAA) to:

**CDR Christine Downing
116 Spring Tanner Road
Hazel Green, AL 35750
256-828-9740**





25 Birthdays in October

Mrs. Caroline H Wilson
LTC Dallas A Shaw, USA
Col Donald R Brewer, USAF
Col Edward L Uher, USAF
Mrs. JoAnn Long Jr
MAJ Curtis Smith, USA
CPT Gary M Rose, USA
Capt Howard Sanderford, USMC
LTC Albert G Parmentier, USA
Col Adrian A Ritchie Jr, USAF
LTC Robert W Hearon, USA
COL Melvin J McLemore, USA
LTC James A Cox, USA

CW3 Raymond E Watford, USA
Col Michael J Vaccaro, USAF
Lt Col Barney F Barron, USAF
CPT Sean R Sterling, USA
CW2 Edward C Baltz, USA
LTC Russell L Dunford, USA
COL William W Stevenson, USA
BG Daniel L Montgomery, USA
LTC John R Scott, USA
LTC Robert E Dudley, USA
CAPT Richard C West, USN
LTC Harold E Walden, USA

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.

Chapter Happenings – September Membership Meeting



Guest speaker Ms. Rae Barthel, activities director at the Tut Fann veteran's home



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.*



TRICARE Open Season & Federal Benefits Open Season Begins 11 Nov

Open season is an annual period when you can enroll in or change health plans for the next year. Now is the time to think through whether you or your family members want to make changes to your current health, dental, and vision plan coverage.

Two open seasons run at the same time this fall: TRICARE Open Season and Federal Benefits Open Season. TRICARE Open Season applies to anyone enrolled in or eligible for TRICARE Prime (including the US Family Health Plan) or TRICARE Select. Federal Benefits Open Season is for enrollment in the Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP). Both the TRICARE and FEDVIP open seasons begin on 11 Nov and end on 9 Dec. Enrollment choices made during this period will take effect on 1 Jan 2020.

What can you do during TRICARE Open Season? If you're eligible to participate in TRICARE Open Season, you have three choices for your 2020 health coverage:

- Do nothing. If you want to stay in your current TRICARE health care plan, you don't have to take any action. You'll continue in your current health plan through 2020 or as long as you're eligible.
- Enroll in a plan. If you're eligible for TRICARE Prime or TRICARE Select but not enrolled, you can enroll in a plan now.
- Change plans. If you're already enrolled in a TRICARE Prime or TRICARE Select plan, you can switch plans and switch between individual and family enrollment.

TRICARE Open Season doesn't apply to TRICARE for Life (TFL). TFL coverage is automatic if you have Medicare Part A and Medicare Part B.

What can you do during Federal Benefits Open Season? FEDVIP, managed by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management, offers eligible TRICARE beneficiaries a choice between multiple vision and dental plans and carriers. If you're already enrolled in a FEDVIP dental and/or vision plan, your enrollment will automatically continue in 2020. If you wish to enroll or make changes to your existing plan, you must do so during open season.

Rushed Commissary and Exchange Merger could have Consequences

Major changes to the commissary and exchange system are closer than ever. Without action by Congress, a four-way merger will occur between the Defense Commissary Agency (DeCA) and the three military exchanges: the Army and Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES), the Navy Exchange (NEX), and the Marine Corps Exchange (MCX).

If the commissaries and exchanges are merged without the necessary protections for patrons and Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) funds, the results could be devastating for these programs and the businesses that are a core part of the military base community.

The National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2019 prohibits using the fiscal year's funds for consolidation, but on Oct. 1, that ban is lifted. MOAA is following the proposed merger closely, and our concern has grown as the funding ban looms and we learn more about the DoD's desired path.

The Defense Department commissioned a business case study to be conducted on the four-way merger last year. The Enterprise Management Task Force recommended moving forward with consolidation earlier this year. DoD reaffirmed their support last month with the public release of the report to Congress and accompanying memo, signed by Deputy Secretary of Defense David Norquist, approving consolidation.

The report to Congress outlines the DoD's support from the business case analysis conducted in 2018 by Boston Consulting Group. However, the analysis overview leaves many unanswered questions as to why a merger is necessary and how it will protect the servicemember and family benefits.

It is unclear why a large-scale merger is the only course being considered to increase efficiencies. For a change of this magnitude, analysis for alternative courses of action should be weighed — and we don't know whether DoD conducted any analysis on this scale.

Additionally, it is unclear what impact any consolidation efforts may have on MWR funds. It is important to note that the exchanges are fully funded by revenue generated from sales while Commissaries are funded using appropriated defense funding.

If DeCA is merged with the exchanges, DoD could use exchange profits to offset commissary appropriations. If this occurs, MWR funds would be reduced as well, hurting servicemembers and families. Reductions in MWR could have unintended consequences on readiness, as these support services are critical to military operations. A promising sign is that Congress is directing the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to get involved. The House NDAA and Senate report language both call on GAO to reanalyze the business case analysis and validate the expected impact on patrons, employees, and the MWR funds. MOAA applauds the GAO review and is optimistic that their impartial review, if approved in the 2020 NDAA, will provide recommendations for how the DoD should proceed.

GAO's review of the DoD's business reform efforts and plans highlight concerns about the DoD's analysis. A recent report indicates "[GAO] could not validate DOD's claims of cost savings related to business reforms it has already made."

Congress should heed the early warning of the GAO study. The legislators are coming back from the August recess with a major task ahead, resolving the two versions of NDAA. There are many issues to come to a consensus on, and the future of the commissary and exchange system should be on their docket.

Without Congressional action, the DoD is free to start consolidation without taking into consideration the ongoing GAO study. [Click here to take action](#) and reach out to your member of Congress and tell them to adopt Section 631 of the House version (H.R. 2500). This section provides essential Congressional oversight and ensures an objective review is completed on the proposed merger.

History of Halloween

Halloween is an annual holiday celebrated each year on October 31, and Halloween 2019 occurs on Thursday, October 31. It originated with the ancient Celtic festival of [Samhain](#), when people would light bonfires and wear costumes to ward off ghosts. In the eighth century, Pope Gregory III designated November 1 as a time to honor all saints; soon, All Saints Day incorporated some of the traditions of Samhain. The evening before was known as All Hallows Eve, and later Halloween. Over time, Halloween evolved into a day of activities like trick-or-treating, carving jack-o-lanterns, festive gatherings, donning costumes and eating sweet treats.

Halloween's origins date back to the ancient Celtic festival of Samhain (pronounced sow-in). The [Celts](#), who lived 2,000 years ago in the area that is now Ireland, the United Kingdom and northern France, celebrated their new year on November 1.

This day marked the end of summer and the harvest and the beginning of the dark, cold winter, a time of year that was often associated with human death. Celts believed that on the night before the new year, the boundary between the worlds of the living and the dead became blurred. On the night of October 31, they celebrated Samhain, when it was believed that the ghosts of the dead returned to earth.

In addition to causing trouble and damaging crops, Celts thought that the presence of the otherworldly spirits made it easier for the Druids, or Celtic priests, to make predictions about the future. For a people entirely dependent on the volatile natural world, these prophecies were an important source of comfort and direction during the long, dark winter.

To commemorate the event, Druids built huge sacred bonfires, where the people gathered to burn crops and animals as sacrifices to the Celtic deities. During the celebration, the Celts wore costumes, typically consisting of animal heads and skins, and attempted to tell each other's fortunes.

When the celebration was over, they re-lit their hearth fires, which they had extinguished earlier that evening, from the sacred bonfire to help protect them during the coming winter.

By 43 A.D., the [Roman Empire](#) had conquered the majority of Celtic territory. In the course of the 400 years that they ruled the Celtic lands, two festivals of Roman origin were combined with the traditional Celtic celebration of Samhain.

The first was Feralia, a day in late October when the Romans traditionally commemorated the passing of the dead. The second was a day to honor Pomona, the Roman goddess of fruit and trees. The symbol of Pomona is the apple, and the incorporation of this celebration into Samhain probably explains the tradition of bobbing for apples that is practiced today on [Halloween](#).

On May 13, 609 A.D., Pope Boniface IV dedicated the [Pantheon](#) in Rome in honor of all Christian martyrs, and the Catholic feast of All Martyrs Day was established in the Western church. Pope Gregory III later expanded the festival to include all saints as well as all martyrs and moved the observance from May 13 to November 1.

By the 9th century, the influence of [Christianity](#) had spread into Celtic lands, where it gradually blended with and supplanted older Celtic rites. In 1000 A.D., the church made November 2 All Souls' Day, a day to honor the dead. It's widely believed today that the church was attempting to replace the Celtic festival of the dead with a related, church-sanctioned holiday.

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All Souls' Day was celebrated similarly to Samhain, with big bonfires, parades and dressing up in costumes as saints, angels and devils. The All Saints' Day celebration was also called All-hallows or All-hallowmas (from Middle English *Alhallowmesse* meaning All Saints' Day) and the night before it, the traditional night of Samhain in the Celtic religion, began to be called All-Hallows Eve and, eventually, Halloween

The celebration of Halloween was extremely limited in colonial New England because of the rigid Protestant belief systems there. Halloween was much more common in [Maryland](#) and the southern colonies.

As the beliefs and customs of different European ethnic groups and the American Indians meshed, a distinctly American version of Halloween began to emerge. The first celebrations included "play parties," which were public events held to celebrate the harvest. Neighbors would share stories of the dead, tell each other's fortunes, dance and sing.

Colonial Halloween festivities also featured the telling of ghost stories and mischief-making of all kinds. By the middle of the nineteenth century, annual autumn festivities were common, but Halloween was not yet celebrated everywhere in the country.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, America was flooded with new immigrants. These new immigrants, especially the millions of Irish fleeing the [Irish Potato Famine](#), helped to popularize the celebration of Halloween nationally.

Borrowing from European traditions, Americans began to dress up in costumes and go house to house asking for food or money, a practice that eventually became today's "trick-or-treat" tradition. Young women believed that on Halloween they could divine the name or appearance of their future husband by doing tricks with yarn, apple parings or mirrors.

In the late 1800s, there was a move in America to mold Halloween into a holiday more about community and neighborly get-togethers than about ghosts, pranks and [witchcraft](#). At the turn of the century, Halloween parties for both children and adults became the most common way to celebrate the day. Parties focused on games, foods of the season and festive costumes.

Parents were encouraged by newspapers and community leaders to take anything "frightening" or "grotesque" out of Halloween celebrations. Because of these efforts, Halloween lost most of its superstitious and religious overtones by the beginning of the twentieth century.

By the 1920s and 1930s, Halloween had become a secular but community-centered holiday, with parades and town-wide Halloween parties as the featured entertainment. Despite the best efforts of many schools and communities, vandalism began to plague some celebrations in many communities during this time.

By the 1950s, town leaders had successfully limited vandalism and Halloween had evolved into a holiday directed mainly at the young. Due to the high numbers of young children during the fifties baby boom, parties moved from town civic centers into the classroom or home, where they could be more easily accommodated. Between 1920 and 1950, the centuries-old practice of trick-or-treating was also revived. Trick-or-treating was a relatively inexpensive way for an entire community to share the Halloween celebration. In theory, families could also prevent tricks being played on them by providing the neighborhood children with small treats.

Thus, a new American tradition was born, and it has continued to grow. Today, Americans spend an estimated \$6 billion annually on Halloween, making it the country's second largest commercial holiday after [Christmas](#). III

Army Recommends Changes To Arlington Cemetery Burial Eligibility

The Army on Wednesday announced its recommendations for eligibility changes at Arlington National Cemetery – changes which would reduce those eligible for below-ground burials but still offer above-ground inurnment of cremated remains for many veterans.

In addition to preserving 1,000 gravesites for current and future Medal of Honor recipients, the proposed revised criteria for those who honorably serve the nation are as follows:

For below-ground interment:

- Killed in Action, to include repatriated remains of service members
- Award recipients of the Silver Star and above who also served in combat
- Recipients of the Purple Heart
- Combat-related service deaths while conducting uniquely military activities
- Former Prisoners of War
- Presidents and Vice Presidents of the United States
- Veterans with combat service who also served out of uniform as a government official and made significant contributions to the nation's security at the highest levels of public service

For above-ground inurnment:

- World War II-era veterans, to include legislated active duty designees
- Retirees from the armed forces who are eligible to receive retired pay but are not otherwise eligible for interment
- Veterans who have served a minimum of two years on active duty and who have served in combat
- Veterans without combat service who also served out of uniform as a government official and made significant contributions to the nation's security at the highest levels of public service

These proposals follow months of deliberation and input from veteran service organizations like MOAA and two independent surveys with over 250,000 responses.

“The nation’s premiere military cemetery is at a critical crossroads in its history,” Army officials state in a released statement. “Nearly all of the 22 million living armed forces members and veterans are eligible for less than 95,000 remaining burial spaces within these hallowed grounds.”

MOAA President and CEO Lt. Gen. Dana Atkins, expressed appreciation for the Army’s efforts to preserve the cemetery’s future use, but also stressed the importance of the upcoming public comment period as part of the federal rule-making process.

“The Army’s decision to restrict retirees from in-ground interment may be a concern for those whose end-of-life plans included this traditional burial at Arlington,” Atkins said. . “While the changes do

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do accommodate above-ground inurnment, we will need to assess the impact to all previously eligible servicemembers and take advantage of the public comment period under the Federal Registry to share the results of that assessment.”

According to Arlington officials, a federal rule can take up to nine months before being enacted and will include a public comment period, in which any concerns and questions would be addressed. Once the final rule, with any potential changes, is published in the Federal Registry, there will be an “as of” effective date. This will not affect any planned burials which are in the queue at that time.

In May 2016, Congress passed PL 114-158 requiring the Secretary of the Army to submit to both chambers’ Committees on Veterans’ Affairs and Armed Services a report on the interment and inurnment capacity of Arlington National Cemetery

The Army’s proposed changes differ notably from the Advisory Committee on Arlington National Cemetery (ACANC) report submitted in December of 2018 with their independent assessment on how to extend active burials and capacity into the future. The ACANC recommended future inurnments be altered to reflect selected “levels of service and sacrifice” as follows:

- Killed in action, recipients of MOH, recipients of Purple Heart, Silver Star and above, died on active duty, or former POW
- Above ground inurnment remain available to WWII and Korean War veterans
- Recipients of Distinguished Service Medals (DSM)

The most noteworthy variance between the Army’s proposal and the Advisory Committee’s is the inclusion of retiree and veterans for above ground inurnment, as well as Presidents, Vice Presidents, and government officials with “significant contributions” to national security and public service at a high level.

Keeping with our own Testimony before the House Armed Services Committee in March of 2018, as well as our submitted Statement for the Record to the Senate Armed Services Committee this February, MOAA has been committed to explore any avenues which supports our stated recommendations:

- No action is taken restricting eligibility for the military retiree population, other than reserving a set number of plots for specific honorees, such as those killed in action or those who receive a Medal of Honor
- Continued appropriated funding to undertake acquisition and development of adjacent land, including the Southern Expansion project currently underway
- Appropriated funds for the study and eventual acquisition of noncontiguous land to be used as an Arlington annex

Regardless of any changes at Arlington, veterans and their families still have multiple options in planning for their burials. The National Cemetery Administration oversees 138 National Cemeteries, which serve as a sacred resting place for over 4 million veterans. Additionally, the National Cemetery Administration (NCA) plans to activate several more cemeteries around the country by next year, ensuring their mission that “No Veteran Ever Dies.” IIII

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 October

- 1 October – Henry Ford’s Model T went on sale for the first time (1908)
- 1 October – Peoples Republic of China founded (1949)
- 1 October – Panama Cana Zone retuned to Panama (1979)
- 2 October – Thurgood Marshall sworn in as first African American justice of the Supreme Court (1967)
- 3 October – East & West Germany reunited (1990)
- 4 October – Russians launched the first satellite – Sputnik I - into orbit (1957)
- 4 October – Pope Paul VI became the first Pope to visit the US (1965)
- 6 October – The first "talkie" opened in New York - *The Jazz Singer* starring Al Jolson (1927)
- 6 October – Egyptian President Anwar Sadat was assassinated in Cairo (1981)
- 8 October – Great Chicago Fire (1871)
- 8 October – Sergeant Alvin York single-handedly took out a German machine-gun battalion (1918)
- 10 October – Spiro Agnew resigned as Vice President (1973)
- 10 October – Monthly Board Meeting – Java Cafe**
- 12 October - Brazil became independent of Portugal (1822)
- 12 October – Monthly Breakfast – City Café Diner**
- 13 October – US Navy established (1775)
- 13 October - The cornerstone of the White House was laid by George Washington (1792)
- 14 October – Columbus Day
- 14 October - Chuck Yeager became the first man to break the sound barrier (1947)
- 15 October – Napoleon Bonaparte exiled on the Island of St. Helena (1815)
- 15 October – US Senate confirmed Clarence Thomas to the Supreme Court (1991)
- 18 October – The Nuremberg War Crimes Trial began (1945)
- 19 October - "Black Monday" occurred on Wall Street as stocks plunged 22.6% (1987)
- 20 October - General Douglas MacArthur “retuned” to the Philippines (1944)
- 20 October - Jacqueline Kennedy married Greek businessman Aristotle Onassis (1968)
- 21 October - Thomas Edison successfully tested an electric incandescent lamp (1879)
- 22 October – Cuban Missile Crisis began (1962)
- 24 October – United Nations founded (1945)
- 25 October – Retiree Appreciation Day
- 26 October - The shoot-out at the O.K. Corral (1881)
- 30 October – Monthly Member Meeting – Summit Club**
- 31 October - Halloween

