

MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA
ALAMO CHAPTER



THE



LARIAT

Volume 29, Number 7



July 2009



President's Message

The heat of summer is upon us, and I am certain that each of you, like Ruby and I, have closed your house. You probably have the fans running; the air conditioning set at 78 and will enjoy the closed window scenario until the October-November timeframe. The long hot summer is upon us.

Your chapter continues to operate at the best of its ability. The social programs continue, and our missions are worked. The next Board meeting is on 16 July. It is an open meeting and certainly anyone is welcome to attend. We are going to have it at our chapter offices on Ft Sam Houston.

I want to concentrate this month on one very important function of our chapter, of the MOAA State Council and of National MOAA. In short, the concentration is political advocacy. Each of you know that we are strictly and totally a non-partisan organization. Our responsibility at the chapter level, at the state level (managed so capably by the Council President, our own EVP, Major Jim Cunningham), and at the national level is to disregard partisanship. We are interested in the military. We are interested in the veterans, the active duty (regular, Guard

or Reserve) and family members of the same. Our mission is to be very careful to follow legislation and to advocate, as Americans; as people who have served our great country and who clearly know that freedom is not free. We must be "forever vigilant" as they used to say in the Strategic Air Command. We must ensure our rights and those promises and commitments that were made to us in years gone by and in current times are honored and faithfully executed.

Along those lines, we will be keeping you informed through our legislative experts, Frank Parks and Ed LeFebvre and to keep you briefed on issues that are of concern to us. We ask each of you to subscribe to the MOAA Legislative Update and follow their thoughts. Do that by signing up for them on the Legislative Action page of the National MOAA website (www.moaa.org). Please remember, these are non-partisan which makes it very, very important to us. I speak these words with sincere conviction. The primary reason for the national MOAA, state organizations and our chapter is to be vigilant always. We ask each of our members to take that approach as we go forward.

I ask each month for input, and in the most recent month I did get some input from loyal and faithful members. It is very much appreciated. In fact I received some input from

(Continued on Page 6)

Our August Speaker is General Habiger!

General Habiger is the former CINC, U.S. Strategic Command; Director, Office of Security and Emergency Operations, Department of Energy; President and CEO, San Antonio Water System (SAWS) and Member, Board of Directors, Nuclear Threat Initiative.

General Eugene Habiger has more than 35 years of experience in national security and nuclear operations, and he has graciously agreed to be our speaker at the August luncheon.

Save the date and don't miss this most informative presentation!

Save The Dates

July 23 - Luncheon
Spkr: Gen Alfred Valenzuela
RAFB Parr Officers Club

August 27 - Luncheon
Spkr: Gen Gene Habiger
Ft Sam Golf Club

September 23 - Picnic
RAFB Eberle Park

October 22 - Luncheon
Lackland Gateway Club

November 19 - Luncheon
RAFB Parr Officers Club

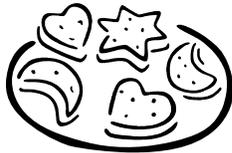
December 11 - Christmas Party
RAFB Parr Officers Club

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Chapter News & Notices

VA Reopening Health Care Enrollment to Thousands of Veterans



Cookie Angels

The cookies angels were hard at work again last month. Many thanks to the following who either baked goodies, brought fruits or provided much needed personal items to our wounded soldiers at Ft Sam Houston's Warrior and Family Support Center.

If you are able to donate to the WFSC please call Susie at (210) 654-0351, so we may add your name to our list. Thank you.

Aina Blake
Irene Collier
Frank and Dolores DeVille
Nita Felder
Susan Filippini
John Gibbs
Ed & Sue McCarthy
Mac and Lori McDonald
Bo Mills
Lolly Orlowski
Frank and Helga Parks
Jan Rund
Phyllis Smith
Susie Tolman
Dot Wise
Tom and Evelyn Woods

In Memoriam

We received the news that the following members have passed away. We wish to convey our sincere condolences and best wishes to their family and loved ones:

Col Norman T. David USAF (Ret)
June 2009

Cpt Walter Grinfield USA (Ret)
06/18/2009

*Past Duty Officer, Entertainer Extraordinaire (Cupid, Devil etc)
Walter, we will miss you!!*



Grateful thanks to the following folks who have kindly donated to the Chapter:

Elizabeth Goetz

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), which now has nearly 8 million Veterans enrolled in its award-winning health care system, is poised to welcome nearly 266,000 more Veterans into its medical centers and clinics across the country by expanding access to health care enrollment for certain Veterans who had been excluded due to their income.

"This incremental approach to expanding enrollment ensures that access to VA health care for a greater number of beneficiaries does not sacrifice timely access or quality medical care for those Veterans already enrolled in VA's health care system," Dr. Gerald Cross, VA's Acting Under Secretary for Health, said. "Over the next four years, we hope to provide enrollment to more than 500,000 Veterans."

Under a new regulation effective June 15, VA will enroll Veterans whose income exceeds current means-tested thresholds by up to 10 percent. These Veterans were excluded from VA health care enrollment when income limits were imposed in 2003 on Veterans with no service-connected disabilities or other special eligibility for care. There is no income limit for Veterans with compensable service-connected disabilities or for Veterans being seen for their service-connected disabilities.

Veterans who have applied for VA health care but were rejected due to income at any point in 2009 will have their applications reconsidered under the new income threshold formula. Those who applied before 2009, but were rejected due to income, must reapply. VA will

(Continued on Page 5)

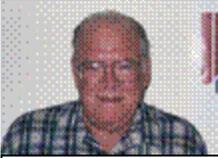
Volunteer Opportunities

Do you have some spare some time? Please help us make this the best chapter ever. Currently we need the following:

VP Programs
Assistant Programs
Chaplain
Legal Counsel
VP Logistics

Golf Tournament Organizer 2010
Active Duty Liaison Officers
Transportation Coordinator
Historian
VP Personal Affairs

Job descriptions are available. Please call Dale Vande Hey at the MOAA-AC office (210) 228-9955.



LEGISLATIVE REPORT



I'm sure most of you are aware of the increased activity in both houses of the Congress. However, much of this activity has dealt with legislature that we are not concerned with as military veterans, retirees, and active duty personnel. In the last two weeks that has started to change.

On June 3 a group of military spouses, led by the wife of Army Chief of Staff GEN George Casey, testified before the Senate Armed Services Personnel Subcommittee. Sheila Casey and the other spouses pulled no punches in highlighting the stresses military families incur that are associated with operations tempo and deployment separations, health care access, and children's education. Given the interest expressed by the subcommittee, we can expect to hear more about this testimony, and particularly the idea of school vouchers for military children.

On June 4, MOAA Government Relations Deputy Director CDR Rene Campos (USN-Ret) joined a panel of witnesses before the House Veterans Affairs Subcommittee on Health to discuss ways the VA and DoD can improve care and support to families and caregivers of wounded, ill, and injured service members. Campos stressed the need for major system fixes - not just patching the system with additional layers of programs and policies that further entrench the bureaucracies and build up more barriers.

CDR Campos said Congress needs to pass legislation that would establish a joint, permanent, one-stop VA-DoD seamless system of care and support. "Seamless transition is a project that requires consistent long-term oversight if we are ever to change cultures. If VA-DoD remains focused on meeting the needs of troops, veterans and their families, rather than the needs of the bureaucracy, then we'll build the right system - for today and the future." As you can see from the quotes CDR Campos didn't pull any punches either.

On June 10 the House Veterans Affairs Committee approved a number of important bills. But none deals with the testimony of CDR Campos. H.R. 952, Combat-Related PTSD, would presume that members suffering from PTSD who had served in a combat zone could have the PTSD deemed service connected. H.R. 1821, Vocational Rehabilitation Employment benefits for wounded warriors would allow 15 years after service (vs the current 12) for a disabled veteran to receive job counseling, training and a subsistence allow-

ance. H.R. 1098 Women Veterans Health Care would expand health care services and establish a pilot program providing child care support for women veterans. Most importantly the Committee approved a VA Advanced Appropriations Bill. This bill would authorize the VA to submit two VA health budgets at once, beginning with the 2010 and 2011 fiscal years. The bill is designed to overcome delayed funding starts for VA Health care that have plagued the system for years. Congress has failed to approve funding by the first of the fiscal year in 19 of the last 20 years. All of these bills will need to be brought before the full House for a vote before being sent to the Senate for their approval.

The House Armed Services Military Personnel Subcommittee completed the first draft of the Defense Authorization Bill, which included several improvements for active duty and Guard/Reserve forces, but didn't include President Obama's plan to extend concurrent receipt to disability retirees. MOAA's sources indicate that committee leaders and some

(Continued on Page 4)

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Legislative Report

(Continued from Page 3)

members will offer Obama's initiative, full concurrent receipt; SBP/DIC offset repeal and more - when the full Armed Services Committee considers the bill next week. Now is the time to call or e-mail your congressman to ask for his/her support of these amendments.

H.R. 1604 and H.R. 2510 (Rep. Susan Davis, D-CA) concerning Military voting were both approved by the House Administration Committee this week. Together the two measures will help protect voting rights for absentee military members and their families. In related action, MOAA and the Military Coalition have endorsed Sen. John Cornyn's (R-TX) S. 1026 which would improve the collection and delivery of absentee ballots for overseas uniformed services voters in federal elections. According to the Federal Election Assistance Commission, only one-third of the estimated one million ballots sent to military and overseas voters in 2008 were actually cast or counted - an appalling figure. Again you need to call or e-mail your Congressmen to ask for his/her support of this legislation.

The last bill I want to talk about is H.R. 816, The Military Retiree's Healthcare Protection Act, introduced by Rep. Chet Edwards (D-TX) and Rep. Walter Jones (R-NC). This bill would prohibit DoD from increasing TRICARE fees by specifying that the authority to increase TRICARE fees exists only in the Congress. MOAA national has prepared an editable message that can be accessed on the MOAA web site. You will find it by going through the Legislative Affairs Section of the web site.

That's all for this month.

Maj Frank Parks (Ret)

Viet Nam Era Reunion

Who: K Company 75th Rangers/4th Infantry Division, 1st BDE LRRPS

What: 2009 Reunion

Where: Radisson Downtown Market Square Hotel
502 Durango
San Antonio, TX 78207

When: 12-15 August 2009

POC: Bill Filippini

210-545-4370 (H)

210-884-9027 (C)

flipsue@stic.net

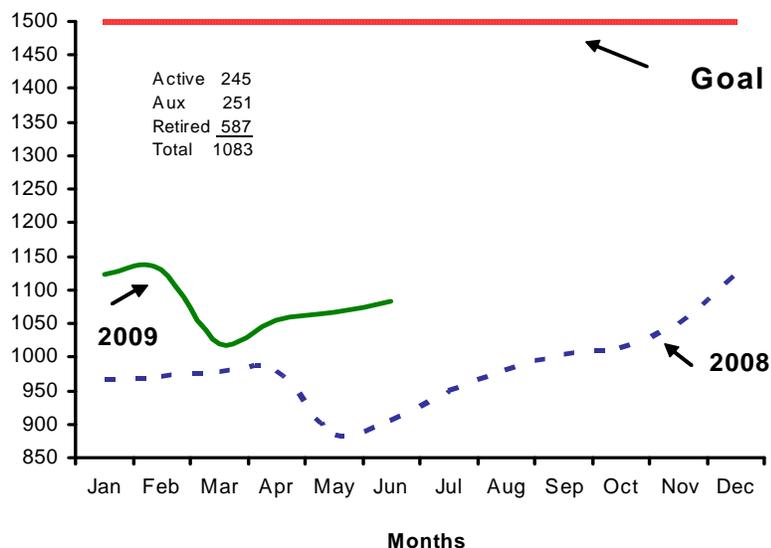
NOTE: There will be a welcome reception held at the Hotel pool on 12 Aug '09 from 1800 to 1900 hrs (Casual). If you would like to join us, please call Bill Filippini by the 20 July.

Welcome New Members!

LTC Jose Perez USA
LtCol Paashka Prowell USAF (Ret)
Maj Kevin Bayless USA
Cpt Mark Adkins USA
Cpt Rodemil Fuentes USA
Cpt Felipe Galvan USA
Cpt Pedro Garcia USA
Cpt Laron General USA
Cpt Valentino Parris USA
Cpt Jimmy Wade USA
2Lt Karin Cleverley USA
2Lt Erinn Deane USA
2Lt Matthew Evans USA
2Lt Eric Gutierrez USA
2Lt Peter Houhoulb USA
2Lt Sarah Hundley USA
2Lt Jhordn Lewis USA
2Lt Sterling Meyers USA
2Lt Fernando Najera USA
2Lt Blake Niewenhuis USA
2Lt Lindsay Reigrut USA
2Lt Jeanette Rivera USA
2Lt Travis Seale USA
2Lt Robert Vadney USA
2Lt Jenny Valdivieso USA
2Lt Sonia Villarreal USA

Alamo Chapter Membership

As of: June 15, 2009



Exec VP's Corner



The Texas State Legislature has ended its 81st Session with some successes and lots of unfinished business. It is likely that a special session of the Legislature will be called to address things such as voter ID, sun setting of the Department of Insurance, TXDOT and other issues.

I am attaching to my article this month a piece that I wrote as a summary of legislation “passes and not passes” of importance to the Active Duty, Guard, Reserve and Veterans. This was done in my capacity as the President of the Texas Council of Chapters. Please let me have any comments that you might have.

WRAP-UP OF THE 81ST SESSION

The 81st Session of the Texas Legislature has concluded with a lot of business still pending. It is likely that a special session will be called at some time to address some of the issues left pending. All in all, however, some very important legislation was passed to help make Texas much more Military and Veteran friendly. A complete listing of some of the key legislation passed and not passed is attached.

We did not get everything that we and the Military Coalition wanted; however, we did get some key things. The Military Compact for the Benefit of Military Children will make it much easier for children of military personnel who are “PCSing” to get the credit that they deserve in our school systems without having to repeat many things they previously were required to do.

Finally, the implementing legislation for Proposition 9, passed in 2007 with over an 86% of the plebiscite, was passed. It was very close, but with a bit of legislative magic it was achieved. When signed by the Governor, this will mean that disabled veterans will get a break on their property

taxes retroactively to January 1, 2009, which will affect their 2010 tax bills. This can range from \$5,000 less to totally eliminating the bill!

Another inequity was taken care of this session. During the 78th Session, the legislature created a Veterans Assistance Fund to be administered by the Texas Veterans Commission. This was to help veterans with monetary issues and Veterans organizations that would do the same. The problem was that the fund was never funded, so for years it has only had a very small pittance of money in it and could not be implemented. In an effort to overcome this problem and not cause any drain on state funds or budget, the Veterans Coalition and members of the legislature introduced bills to create a scratch off game that would be devoted to funding this fund. There was major opposition on the part of the State Affairs Committee to passing SB421 out for a vote of the Senate. On the House side, HB1299, which was identical, was passed and sent to the Senate and the very same Committee that was holding up SB421. It looked as if this effort was doomed.

In another bit of legislative magic, HB1299 was amended onto SB1655, which had already passed the Senate and was in the House for approval. When the SB was returned to the Senate, it went directly to the floor of the Senate for approval after a bit of tense waiting to be heard. It was finally approved by the Senate and sent to the Governor.

This has been a very enlightening experience, but has given the Texas Council and MOAA a great voice and much exposure to the leaders in the Texas legislature. They are very interested in what we have to say and have repeatedly invited testimony about various issues. It is very important

that the Texas Council remain active in this activity and extremely important that all of our local Chapters engage their local legislators and make themselves known. This is the only way that we can assure that our Active Duty, Guard, Reserve, Veterans and families will be heard and taken care of and we have to be active in doing this.

I want to especially thank all Chapters and Chapter members who responded to my messages during the session to weigh in on various issues. Your contacts with the key players and your own individual legislators had a great effect and, I believe, helped get some things done that wouldn't have happened had it not been for your support!

Maj Jim Cunningham (Ret.)

VA HealthCare

(Continued from Page 2)

contact these Veterans through a direct-mail campaign, Veterans service organizations, and a national and regional marketing campaign.

Information about enrollment and an income and assets calculator are available at www.va.gov/healtheligibility. The calculator provides a format in which Veterans enter their household income, number of dependents, and zip codes to see if they may qualify for VA health care enrollment.

In addition to applying online, Veterans may also contact VA's Health Benefits Service Center at 1-877-222-VETS (1-877-222-8387). Each VA medical center across the country has an enrollment coordinator available to provide Veterans with enrollment and eligibility information.

Source: VA News Release June 19, 2009

Military Medics - Then and Now

Bio - July Speaker

From the start of the conflict at Concord/Lexington to the current involvement of our armed forces in Iraq and Afghanistan, the role of the military medic has not changed in concept. The remarkable change has been in the capability of maintaining fighting strength in the far corners of the world and timely adequate wound management.

As a preamble to the battle at Bunker Hill (Breed's Hill), a physician was appointed as head of the "Hospital" - the designation at the time for the medical support group. The first appointee was a physician from Boston named Dr. Benjamin Church. Much to the consternation of all, Dr. Church was uncovered as the lead British spy who was revealing what secrets we had to General Clinton of the British forces. During those days the number of available fighting men was always hampered by critical factors such as inadequate clothing, lack of sanitation, lack of food, lack of weapons, lack of ammunition, lack of protection from the weather, rampant disease, and inadequate wound care.

Today's soldiers, sailors, and airper-

sons are well immunized; receive timely basic wound care; have the benefit of timely application of life support systems; are rapidly evacuated to sophisticated wound centers; have extensive rehabilitation; and have the benefit of supportive after care for the duration of their lives. Our fighting personnel have life saving measures applied from the time of wounding by their buddies and the combat medic. Thankfully the use of the tourniquet has been revived. If the wounded warrior survives until he or she reaches a definitive facility, the survival rate is 96%. The mortality of teen age drivers on US highways is much higher. Mortality rates on the battlefield have historically been at 50% or higher until World War II when the downward trend commenced. The rates declined even further during the Korean War, dropped more during the Vietnam War, and now are at the lowest point in history.

We can only hope and pray that the day may come when there will be no need for men to resolve their differences by employing deadly forces.

*Paul W. Myers, MD, FACS, DSC (Hon)
Lt. General, USAF (Ret)*

President's Message

(Continued from Page 1)

one of our past leaders, LtCol Phyllis Smith, who is very mindful of the responsibilities of the government's commitment to our veterans. She kept us informed on some issues that she has seen that we will continue to track in the area of Tricare for Life that we must be very diligent in protecting.

That said, once again, I hasten to add, we need leadership, we need people to identify people, you if possible, to serve in leadership capacities. We have several positions that really need filling. We ask you to be forever vigilant in our advocacy efforts. Send those postcards in. Call on your designated representatives; let us hear from

you on what we can do at the chapter level. Our entire mission is to help take care of our military, and your membership involvement and dues help us do that. We are so thankful for both. Please keep the messages coming. I do know our editor, Col Kerry Green continues to do a wonderful job with our contractor on our newsletter, and

he is always looking for Letters to the Editor. Let's not disappoint Kerry. He wants them; he is asking for them, we need them for the betterment of the chapter.

God bless each of you, God bless America.

LtCol Edward Marvin (Ret)

Alfred A. Valenzuela Major General, USA (Ret)

Served 33 years in the United States Army
Served in 6 Infantry Divisions and 3 Corps
Served in Kuwait, Peru, Colombia, Somalia, Panama, Grenada, El Salvador, Korea, Germany, Puerto Rico and Turkey
Board of Directors of Boy Scouts – Texas
Board of Directors of Eagle Scout Association
Board of Directors of Boy's & Girl's Club
Board of Directors of Tomas Rivera Policy Institute
Board of Directors of Trustees St. Mary's University
Board of Directors of Communities in School
Board of Directors of C5I
Board of Directors of Taser International
Board of Directors of Armor Designs, LLC
Created an Educational Foundation
Opened a Charter School for at risk children on the West Side of San Antonio
Distinguished Alumni of St. Mary's University
Eagle Scout
Boys Club Hall of Fame
Most Influential Hispanics, Hispanic Business Magazine
Bronze Star for Valor
Soldiers Medal for Heroism
Defense Distinguished Service Medal
Defense Service Medal
Wrote and Published "No Greater Love, The Lives and Times of Hispanic Soldiers" with all proceeds going to the families of the 21 soldiers he buried from the war.
President / CEO San Antonio Housing Authority
Board of Directors of USAA Federal Savings Bank



ROTC

Another exciting and rewarding ROTC awards season ended at the end of the school year on 14 June. The final award was presented by me on 30 May to Cadet John D. Salinas at Winston Churchill High School. I call it exciting and rewarding because it is always a pleasure to work with these highly motivated cadets and their equally motivated instructors.

A total of 60 ROTC/JROTC awards were presented or provided by our chapter. This year we included 4 ROTC awards to universities such as UTSA, Texas A&M Corpus Christi and St. Mary's University. UTSA received two awards because they have two ROTC units – one Air Force and one Army. Two new High Schools were added. They were Claudia Taylor "Lady Bird" Johnson High School and Canyon Lake High School.

It was hectic. There were several days where we had as many as four awards to present, not to mention days where we had to present two or three awards. Thanks to our volunteer presenters we were able to have somebody present at most of the ceremonies.

LCDR Gil Rodriguez (Ret)



Have a safe and happy
July 4th!



Solitaires



Happy birthday USA! Your constitution is a model for nations seeking human rights and democracy. But it didn't come easily. Let's examine the Bill of Rights of our Constitution. We take our individual rights for granted. But they were not in the original drafting of this famous document. Many of the nation's leaders were for individual and states rights. Among those who felt the document was weak in the judiciary and individual rights were George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison and George Mason.

George Mason was the actual author of those rights. While a member of the Virginia convention (1775-1776), he drafted the Virginia Declaration of Rights, and a good part of the Virginia Constitution. The Virginia Declaration of Rights, framed by Mason, was widely copied in other colonies, and served as a model for Jefferson in the first part of the Declaration of Independence. It was also the basis for the Federal Constitutional Bill of Rights. The Marquis de Lafayette used it in drafting the French Declaration of Rights of Man and of the Citizens (1789).

Mason did not seek the limelight in the political assemblies of that time. Yet he was one of the five most frequent speakers of the Constitutional Convention. During the last two weeks of the convention he decided not to sign the document. He explained his reasons in length citing the absence of a declaration of rights as his primary concern. He claimed that as written, the House of Representatives was not representative of the nation. The Senate was too powerful. The power of the federal judiciary would destroy the states judiciaries. His colleagues listened to his complaints and incorporated the Bill of Rights into the Constitution. James Madison, a Virginia colleague of

Mason, was the one who actually introduced the Bill of Rights to the Constitutional Convention. He was also a prolific writer and kept good notes. It has commonly been assumed that he was the author of the Bill of Rights.

With time and historical research it was decided that Mason was its actual architect. Belatedly, recognition has been given to this great statesman. On 2 April 2002, a statue of Mason was placed on the Mall, West Potomac Park, near the Jefferson memorial. We have him to thank for his strong advocacy of individual rights: freedom of press, religious tolerance, and rights for trial by jury.

The Tuesday 7 July meeting of the Solitaires will be at the Fort Sam Golf Club. On Sunday 26 July we will meet at the Randolph O Club. Pet lovers will enjoy the guest speaker, Mary Vaden. She breeds Lhasa Apso dogs. She will enlighten us about pet care, training, and how to show your pet pooch at a dog show.

Adapted from information, Library of Congress

Col Irene Collier (Ret)

— If you are a single man or lady and like to eat, chat, make new friends, experience or provide sometimes brief impromptu or scheduled interesting demonstrations, talks, or discussions, whether you are: visiting the area; active duty or retired; widowed or divorced; the SOLITAIRES is the group for you.

— This is a wonderful opportunity to enjoy camaraderie with other single men and ladies whose backgrounds and experiences are or have been with the military. Call the office (210) 228-9955 for more details.

The Ten Things Every American Student Should Know About Our Army in World War II - Part 1

The following reprint from FPRI is the first in a series of articles covering a period some of our members remember first hand. For those of us who were not there, hopefully, the following history lesson will serve us well as we face the tremendous challenges confronting this great Nation.

Editor

#1. The U.S. Army was a puny weakling when the war began.

When the European war began in earnest on September 1, 1939, with the German invasion of Poland, the U.S. Army ranked seventeenth among armies of the world in size and combat power, just behind Romania. It numbered 190,000 soldiers. (It would grow to 8.3 million in 1945, a 44-fold increase.) When mobilization began in 1940, the Army had only 14,000 professional officers. The average age of majors--a middling rank, between captain and lieutenant colonel--was nearly 48; in the National Guard, nearly one-quarter of first lieutenants were over 40 years old, and the senior ranks were dominated by political hacks of certifiable military incompetence. Not a single officer on duty in 1941 had commanded a unit as large as a division in World War I. At the time of Pearl Harbor, in December 1941, only one American division was on a full war footing.

Some American coastal defense guns had not been test fired in 20 years, and the Army lacked enough anti-aircraft guns to protect even a single American city. The senior British military officer in Washington told London that American forces "are more unready for war than it is possible to imagine." In May 1940, the month that the German Blitzkrieg swept through the Low Countries and overran France, the U.S. Army owned a total of 464 tanks, mostly puny light

tanks with the combat power of a coffee can.

There was also a mental unreadiness in many quarters. In 1941, the Army's cavalry chief assured Congress that four well-spaced horsemen could charge half a mile across an open field to destroy an enemy machine-gun nest, without sustaining a scratch. This ignored the evidence of not only World War II, which was already two years underway, but also World War I.

#2. The war encumbered all of America.

Obviously a lot happened to get from an army of 190,000 to an army of almost 8.5 million. A total of 16 million Americans served in uniform in WWII; virtually every family had someone in harm's way, virtually every American had an emotional investment in our Army. That WWII army of 8.5 million existed in a country of about 130 million; by comparison, today we have an army of roughly 500,000 in a country of 307 million.

About the time of Pearl Harbor, Army planners estimated that the U.S. Army would require 213 divisions by 1944. (A division typically had about 15,000 soldiers.) We never even got close to 213; instead, the Army mobilized only 90 divisions by the end of the war. That compares to about 300 divisions for Germany; 400 for the Soviet Union, and 100 for Japan.

There were several reasons for this. First, the manpower demands of the air forces and particularly of the supply services competed with the manpower demands of the Army. (Service forces--quartermaster, transportation corps--were more than one-third of the strength of the Army by September 1942.) Second, there was a gradual

recognition that the Soviet Union was fighting most of the German army, which meant the United States would not have to face as many Germans as originally feared. There was also recognition that the United States could provide industrial muscle unlike any nation on earth, to build tanks, airplanes, and trucks, to make things like penicillin and synthetic rubber, not only for us but for our Allies. That meant keeping a fair amount of manpower in factories and other industrial jobs, while of course also getting women into the workforce as never before.

Because we had relatively few divisions, virtually all of them had to be committed to combat. A bit more than two-thirds of the U.S. Army fought in Europe and the Mediterranean, with the remainder in the Pacific (along with all six U.S. Marine Corps divisions). That also meant that you couldn't easily pull the divisions out of the war to let them rest or rebuild; they had to be kept up to strength while in the fight.

The First Division is an example. It had fought in North Africa and in Sicily in 1942 and 1943, and when it was committed to battle in Western Europe, on Omaha Beach on D-Day, June 6, 1944, of the next 11 months, until the war in Europe ended on May 8, 1945, it spent 317 days in combat. During that period it typically took two to three thousand casualties a month, up to five thousand or more a month. In Western Europe, it had almost 30,000 battle and non-battle casualties (like frostbite or trench foot.) Remember, a division typically has about 15,000 soldiers.

(Continued on Page 9)

Top Ten

(Continued from Page 8)

Yet the division ended the war almost at full strength. The Army's replacement system, although poorly run in some fundamental ways, still managed to keep units muscled up, in very sharp contrast to our adversaries, which tended to crumble to nothing. In Western Europe, from Normandy to Czechoslovakia, the Army had 18 divisions with more than 100 percent casualties, and five divisions-including the First-with more than 200 percent casualties. That means the division would be wiped out twice and still be at nearly full strength.

#3. The U.S. Army did not win World War II by itself.

We can be proud of our role, proud of our Army; we must not be delusional, chauvinistic, or so besotted with American exceptionalism that we falsify history. The war began 27 months before American entry into the war. It was fought on six continents, a global conflagration unlike any seen before or since. The British had done a great deal in those 27 months to keep alive the hopes of the western democracies. Russia lost an estimated 26 million people in the war, and its military did most of the bleeding for the Allied cause.

By the end of the war, there were about 60 nations on the Allied side, aligned in what President Roosevelt had long called the "united nations." In Italy alone, Brazilians, Poles, Nepalese, New Zealanders, French, Italians, and a number of other nationalities fought beside us.

Coalition politics played an enormously important part in shoring up the U.S. Army's fighting strength--a recognition that in a global war, the best team wins. In WWII, this was best embodied in Gen. Dwight Eisenhower, who demonstrated diplomatic skills of the first order, including compromise, resolve, coercion, flattery, and pa-

tience.

#4. The U.S. Army's role in the liberation of Europe didn't start at Normandy. The army, those soldiers and commanders, who landed in France on June 6, 1944, did not leap fully armed from the ether. They had a pedigree, individually and collectively, and it's difficult to understand what happened in those final eleven months of the European war following the invasion at Normandy without understanding what preceded it.

In fact, the path to Normandy began more than two years before D-Day, and involved other, earlier D-Days. On the battlefield, it really started in North Africa. How did the U.S. Army end up in North Africa? The United States, famously, entered the war in December 1941, and almost immediately there was agreement between President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill that the first task at hand was to defeat Germany. Their presumption was that Germany was the strongest of the Axis powers, and that clubbing it into submission would inevitably lead to the defeat of its two main partners in crime, Japan and Italy. But beyond that concurrence, of Germany first, there was little agreement on how to translate the principle into a strategic plan.

In fact, there was savage disagreement between the Americans and the British, among the bitterest arguments of the war. Through the spring and early summer of 1942, the American military brain trust led by Gen. George C. Marshall, the Army chief of staff, argued that the quickest, surest way to defeat Germany would be to stage an invasion army in the UK, cross the English Channel, and march for Berlin. The British said "Whoa! Not so fast."

It would be much more sensible, argued the British, to begin the liberation of Europe by attacking the periphery of the Axis empire. North Africa was

proposed as a candidate, its most attractive characteristic being that there were no Germans there. After Germany invaded France in the spring of 1940, Hitler offered the French a deal with the devil. He proposed the creation of a French rump state, occupying the bottom one-third of metropolitan France with a capital in the spa town of Vichy. (The Germans would keep Paris.)

As part of the deal, the French could keep their empire, notably the French possessions in northwest Africa: Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia. The French could also retain their navy and an army of about 100,000 soldiers in North Africa, with the proviso that they agreed to fight any invading force, notably the British. Hitler knew that there were more than 17 million Arabs living in these French colonies, and he wanted the headache of governing them to fall on the French. France of course agreed to the deal, except for a few renegades like an obscure brigadier general named Charles de Gaulle.

In the high councils of the British and Americans this debate over where to strike raged secretly for months. In late July 1942, Roosevelt at last sided with the British against the advice of virtually all his senior military officers. He ordered an Anglo-American invasion of North Africa.

The landings--known as Operation Torch--occurred on November 8, 1942, in Morocco and Algeria. After three days of resistance, the Vichy French in North Africa capitulated, joined the Allied cause, and the Anglo-American army pushed eastward into Tunisia; they were close to within sight of the minarets of Tunis before being stopped cold by the Germans and Italians in late November 1942. The Germans, under the command of Field Marshal Albert Kesselring, reacted with much greater agility and audacity than the Allied brain trust had

(Continued on Page 10)

DoD holds off, for now, on hikes in Tricare fees

Top Ten

(Continued from Page 9)

anticipated, shoving tens of thousands of troops across the Mediterranean. A stalemate persisted in Tunisia for months.

At the same time, 2,000 miles to the east, the British Eighth Army under General Bernard L. Montgomery had defeated another German-Italian army at the Egyptian crossroads of El Alamein, and for the next three months that Axis army, under Field Marshal Erwin Rommel, retreated across the breadth of North Africa, languidly pursued by the British. By late winter 1943, there were four armies--two Allied and two Axis--in Tunisia, a country the size of the state of Georgia.

Over the next two months, Allied strength waxed and Axis strength waned. The Allies gained air supremacy and almost complete control of the seas, effectively strangling the Axis supply line from Europe; the sea passage from Italy became so harrowing that Italian sailors called it "the death route." Hitler decided not to try to evacuate his forces from North Africa; the result was the capture of roughly a quarter million Germans and Italians, a defeat almost as catastrophic for the Axis cause as Stalingrad had been a few months earlier. After Africa came Sicily, then the campaign in Italy. That is the context for Normandy.

Rick Atkinson

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Rick Atkinson is author of *The Army and Dawn* and *The Day of Battle*, and is currently at work on the third volume in his trilogy on the role of the U.S. military in the liberation of Europe in World War II. He joined the *Washington Post*, from which he is now on book leave, in 1983, where he has served as reporter, foreign correspondent, and editor. He has won the Pulitzer Prize three times.

After three years of rejection, the Pentagon this year gave up - at least temporarily - trying to get Congress to approve increases in Tricare fees that have not changed since the program began some 13 years ago.

That doesn't mean it won't try again in a future budget request. But streamlining the system with newfound "efficiencies" can, in the meantime, help slow the swift growth of defense health care costs, new Pentagon Comptroller Robert Hale said. Health care costs for active, reserve and retired service members and their families are spiraling out of control, Pentagon officials say. According to a January study by the Defense Business Board, annual defense health care spending could grow to \$66 billion by fiscal 2015 - up from \$19 billion nine years ago.

The Pentagon is seeking \$47.4 billion to fund health care in fiscal 2010 - nearly 9 percent of its \$533.7 billion budget request. "Military health care is eating our budgetary lunch," Hale said. "We've got to find a way to work with Congress to provide high quality health care and slow down the rate of growth." "The \$47 billion ... is obviously a significant price tag," said Navy Cmdr. Darryn James, a Pentagon spokesman. "The Quadrennial Defense Review will examine health care costs in an attempt to find the necessary efficiencies to slow down the rate of growth." Officials have said to expect the latest QDR - a review of force management issues as well as programs and other priorities - by late summer. Meanwhile, possible health care savings being discussed include continued phase-in of an electronic health records system and promotion of incentives to encourage healthier behaviors among beneficiaries.

One move already announced is the

May 1 launch of an Outpatient Prospective Payment System, which Tricare says will let hospitals know in advance how claims will be processed, reducing overall administrative costs by about \$458 million a year when fully operational.

The Military Officers Association of America, which strongly opposed fee hikes for years, more recently has said it would not object to fee increases that are proportional to cost-of-living increases in retired pay.

But MOAA has long argued that a more efficient health care system would cut costs. The association also continues to promote ideas such as expanded use of mail-order pharmacy services and having Tricare cover copays on private insurance plans, which could encourage "working age" retirees to use their employer's health plans instead of Tricare.

Source: William H. McMichael
bmc michael@militarytimes.com
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FROZEN FEES

The annual enrollment fees for Tricare Prime have never changed from the 1996 rates of \$230 per month for single retirees and \$460 for families. There has never been an enrollment fee for Tricare Standard, the fee-for-service option not available to active duty service members.

Source: William H. McMichael
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Benefits of Membership

- Our monthly newsletter, the *Lariat* which includes a calendar of events, is sent to each member (or made available on-line), and includes both MOAA and Alamo Chapter news. Stay informed!
- Monthly luncheons, which rotate between the Randolph, Fort Sam Houston, and Lackland service clubs, feature informative speakers and are also open to guests.
- Benefit information of all kinds is provided through the Alamo Chapter. We have an experienced Vice President of Personal Affairs who can give quick answers to your and family members' questions, or who can research the more complex issues.
- The opportunity to enjoy the camaraderie of meeting fellow chapter members and their guests. We also plan for various social events, open to families and guests. In addition, our chapter features a singles group called the Solitaires, some of who are surviving spouses. The Solitaires have a busy social calendar.
- Automatic enrollment in MOAA national for one year, which includes the MOAA magazine, the *Military Officer*.
- Make your voice heard on proposed state and national military legislation which may affect you and your family. Both the Alamo Chapter and MOAA national welcome your views!
- Enjoy many benefits, discounts, and services, to include career planning. The Alamo Chapter also provides college scholarships to those who qualify. MOAA Travel helps you plan that great getaway, and is available for members.

Referred by: _____

The **Give Me 10! Campaign** offers some new options for membership. Two options (the second with a sub option) for joining are available:

1. You can join the local MOAA chapter (the Alamo Chapter) for one year membership for the price of \$25.00 (\$15.00 auxiliary - surviving spouse) and receive one year free membership in MOAA National (if not already a member). Please fill out the local chapter membership application form. Please make out a check for \$25.00 (\$15.00 auxiliary member) **payable to MOAA-AC** and **mail the form and check to our local chapter office**.
2. You can join MOAA National receiving two years membership for the normal price of one year - \$28.00 (\$28.00 auxiliary - surviving spouse). Please fill out the local chapter membership application form. Please make out a check for \$28.00 (\$28.00) (or Life Member dues) **payable to MOAA** and **mail the form and check to our local chapter office**. We will then initiate an additional separate national form for you and forward it and your MOAA National check to the national headquarters.
 - 2.a. Then if you choose, you can additionally join the local MOAA chapter (the Alamo Chapter) for one year membership for the price of \$25.00 (\$15.00 auxiliary - surviving spouse). Please make out a separate check for \$25.00 (\$15.00) **payable to MOAA-AC** and include it with the form and check described in paragraph 2 above.

Membership Application

(Annual Membership)

Are you a member of MOAA National? _____



Military Officers Association of America Alamo Chapter

Circle Status: Commissioned & Warrant Officers of all services - Active, Reserves, former, Retired, National Guard, NOAA, PHS, Surviving Spouse.

Name _____
(Print) Last First MI Spouse

Residence Address City State Zip

Rank/Grade Service Date of Birth

Home phone _____ Business phone _____

Civilian/Military Occupation _____

Firm/Unit _____ E-mail* _____

* May we have your permission to publish this information in the Chapter Membership Directory? _____

(*This directory and your e-mail address are exclusively for the use of the chapter and will not be sold or used for any other purpose than chapter communications and/or board approved activity.)

Would you like to access our monthly newsletter (The Lariat) at our website versus having a hard copy mailed to you? _____

Would you be interested in participating in a chapter volunteer activity? _____

In what area(s) would you like to assist (e.g., member recruiting, personal affairs, JROTC awards, public relations, programs & events, phone calling, other, or wherever the need is greatest)? _____

Signature Date

CHARITABLE OUTREACH PROGRAM

Please accept my tax-deductible donation of: \$ _____ to (check one)
Outreach Fund* _____ As designated by the Alamo Chapter _____

* a fund for a yearly college scholarship and other charitable programs and services.

Send To:

MOAA-AC, P.O. Box 8037, San Antonio, Tx 78208-0037

**For questions please call (210) 228-9955 or e-mail: moaa-ac@sbcglobal.net
Also visit our chapter's website at www.alamomoaa.org**

**Please feel free to copy and provide this form
to prospective members.**

1-21-09



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Chapter Events Calendar

JULY

- 1 *Volunteer Hours Due*
- 2 *Staff Meeting 9am MOAA-AC Office*
- 4 Independence Day - Fly the Flag!**
- 4 Independence Day Ceremony Ft Sam Houston**
- 7 Solitaire's Luncheon 11am Ft Sam Houston Golf Club House**
- 15 *Ft Sam Volunteer Advisory Council Mtg. 9am*
- 16 *Board Meeting 10am MOAA-AC Office*
- 23 Chapter Luncheon 11am Randolph Parr O Club**
- 26 Solitaire's Brunch 11am Randolph Parr O Club**
- 28 *Extravaganza Sam Houston Club (Ft Sam Newcomers Welcome)*

AUGUST

- 1 *Volunteer Hours Due*
- 4 Solitaire's Luncheon 11am Ft Sam Houston Golf Club**
- 6 *Staff Meeting 9am MOAA-AC Office*
- 14 Victory in Japan Day**
- 19 *Ft Sam Volunteer Advisory Council Mtg. 9am*
- 21-23 *TCC Quarterly Mtg Wichita Falls*
- 23 Solitaire's Brunch 11am Randolph Parr O Club**
- 25 *Extravaganza Sam Houston Club (Ft Sam Newcomers Welcome)*
- 27 Chapter Luncheon Ft Sam Golf Club**
- 28 *Draft Budget Due*

Note: Events **bolded** are for the **general membership** and *italicized* are for *staff*, though members are always welcome.
Please call the office for details (210) 228-9955

Ongoing:

Cookie Angels delivering items to Warrior & Family Support Center

SEPTEMBER

- 1 *Volunteer Hours Due*
- 1 Solitaire's Luncheon 11am Ft Sam Houston Golf Club**
- 3 *Staff Meeting 9am MOAA-AC Office*
- 3 *VA Volunteers Meeting 1pm*
- 7 Labor Day – Fly the Flag!**
- 11 Patriot Day – Fly the Flag!**
- 11-13 *Chapter Presidents Symposium*
- 16 *Ft Sam Volunteer Advisory Council Mtg. 9am*
- 18 POW/MIA Recognition Day**
- 23 Chapter Picnic Oktoberfest 6pm Eberle Park Randolph AFB**
- 27 Solitaire's Brunch 11am Randolph Parr O Club**
- 29 *Extravaganza Sam Houston Club (Ft Sam Newcomers Welcome)*

OCTOBER

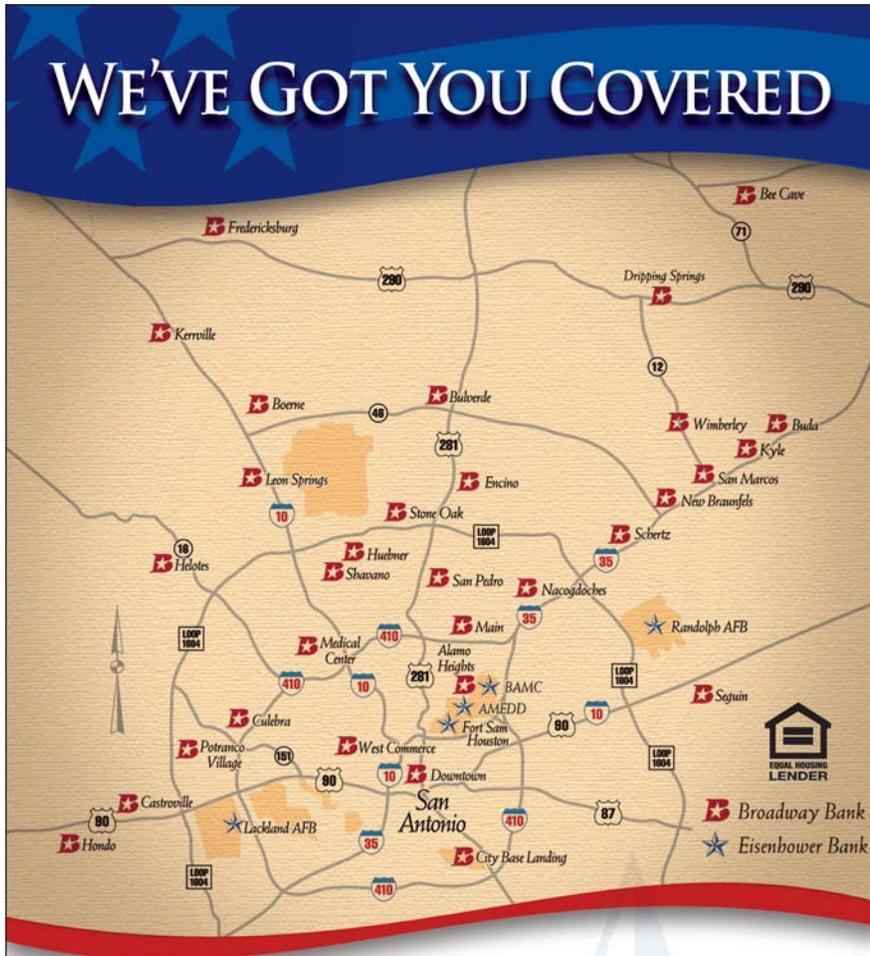
- 1 *Volunteer Hours Due*
- 1 *Staff Meeting 9am MOAA-AC Office*
- 6 Solitaire's Luncheon 11am Ft Sam Houston Golf Club**
- 7 *Board Meeting 11am*
- 13 Columbus Day - Fly the Flag!**
- 17 Retiree Day Lackland 8am-2pm**
- 21 *Ft Sam Volunteer Advisory Council Mtg. 9am*
- 21-24 *MOAA Annual Meeting San Diego*
- 22 Annual Business Meeting Luncheon Lackland**
- 25 Solitaire's Brunch 11am Randolph Parr O Club**
- 27 *Extravaganza Sam Houston Club (Ft Sam Newcomers Welcome)*
- 31 Retiree Day Randolph AFB**

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Statement of Publication

The Lariat is the newsletter of the Military Officers Association of America—Alamo Chapter. It is published once each month to inform the membership of issues and activities of interest to all.

MOAA-AC is a non-profit organization within the state of Texas organized to represent the membership and to support the activities of the Texas Council of Chapters and MOAA National.

Advertising contained in the newsletter is not endorsed by the Chapter and does not represent any recommendation to the membership. Opinions expressed in articles contained herein are not necessarily those of the membership as a whole or the Chapter. Questions should be directed to the Editor, at the Chapter office.

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**TO BE A MAJOR SOURCE OF INFORMATION,
SUPPORT AND SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT FOR THE
MEMBERSHIP;
TO PROVIDE PROGRAMS AND SERVICES FOR
THE COMMON GOOD OF OUR MILITARY
COMMUNITY; AND TO BE A POWERFUL VOICE
SUPPORTING MOAA AT THE LOCAL, STATE AND
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Thursday July 23, 2009

**Chapter Luncheon
Speaker: Major General
Alfred Valenzuela USA (Ret)**

**Randolph Parr Officers Club
Social Hour begins 11am - Lunch served approx 11:45am**

Menu (Indicate Choice)

**A) Chicken Marsala \$12.00 B) London Broil \$13.00
Buttered Noodles Roasted Potatoes**

Balsamic Vegetables

Fresh Garden Green Salad & House Dressing

Freshly Baked Rolls with Butter

Optional Dessert: Sheet Cake \$1.00 extra

Water, Coffee & Tea service and \$3.00 per glass honor wine bar

Enclosed: \$ _____

RSVP with meal choice by Noon Monday July 20th
Reservations not cancelled by noon Tuesday 21st will be billed.

Name _____

Guest: _____

**Non member Officers welcome with reservations
Send reservation slip & check made payable to
MOAA-AC at P.O. Box 8037, San Antonio, TX 78208
RSVP by email moaa-ac@sbcglobal.net or phone (210) 228-9955.**



.Directions to Randolph Parr Officers Club

Enter RAFB at Main gate, Pat Booker Road @ FM 78.

Stay on this road (Harmon Drive) in right lane.

Enter traffic circle staying in outer lane. Take 2nd exit
(right side of the Taj Mahal).

Continue following that street with no turn offs until
reaching the Officers Club sign on the left (across
from 19th Air Force Bldg).

Turn left at the Officers Club sign, and continue
through the residential area to the Club, bearing to the
right to the parking around the Club.