

MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA
ALAMO CHAPTER



THE



LARIAT

Volume 29, Number 10

“Five Star ★★★★★ Chapter”

October 2009



President's Message

Well, it seems as if the long, hot summer of 2009 is now over. As I begin my article for *The Lariat* there is a light rain falling, temperatures are very comfortable and with all of this, I guess fall has come.

Isn't it interesting how weather can affect one's moods so much? Energy levels return, excitement of the fall and football season is back and here we go with refreshed vigor in your chapter.

We have had a good year to date in your chapter. Attendance at your programs is getting better which we very much appreciate. Those that attended General Habiger's speech at the August luncheon were rewarded by an extremely provocative and profound talk on our future by a very professional airman who has attained the rank of four stars.

I know that many of us were taking notes as we listened to General Habiger's comments. We do thank him for honoring us by speaking at our luncheon, and we thank Mike Bidus, one of our colleague members for making those arrangements.

The September picnic, our annual Oktoberfest went off without a hitch, and I want to publicly thank each and every one who attended plus the leadership that works so hard, as they always do, to make the program such a success.

This month we are honored to have a very great advocate for our military. State Senator Leticia Van de Putte, Chairman of the Veteran Affairs and Military Installations Committee, has accepted our invitation to be our guest speaker for the October luncheon.

Several of us in leadership positions in the chapter have worked with the Senator for some years now regarding state veterans issues. Please be assured that she is a champion for our military. She has worked tirelessly for good legislation which she will discuss during her talk.

Incidentally, one year ago her husband, Pete van de Putte, President of the Dixie Flag Company, was also our speaker and gave a great talk on the history of the flag in America. Many of you who attended that told me it was one of the best speakers we have ever had, so we are certain that Senator Van De Putte will be right there with an interesting speech to all of us.

We do encourage you to attend, particularly as one of our chapter missions as well as the national (Continued on Page 5)

Save The Date!

October 17
Retiree Day Lackland
Mitchell Hall
8am-2pm

October 22
Luncheon
Annual Business Meeting
Ft Sam Golf Course

October 31
Retiree Day Randolph AFB
8am

November 7
Retiree Day Ft Sam Houston
8am

November 19 - Luncheon
RAFB Parr Officers Club

December 11 - Christmas Party
RAFB Parr Officers Club

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NOTICE

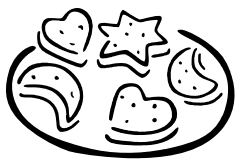
ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

will be held during the luncheon on

OCTOBER 22, 2009

FT SAM GOLF COURSE

Chapter News & Notices



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
 Dotty Foote
 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

Volunteer Opportunities

Do you have some spare some time? Please help us make this the best chapter ever. Currently we are looking to fill the following positions:

- VP Programs
- Assistant Programs
- Active Duty Liaison Officers
- Chaplain
- Transportation Coordinator
- Legal Counsel
- Historian

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

TAPS

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:

Natalie Aloe
 8/27/2009

LTC Oran Cruzen USA (Ret)
 8/28/2009

Frances Hamilton
 9/4/2009

Col Thomas Morehead USA (Ret)
 08/30/2009

In Memoriam

Natalie Aloe passed away August 27th, 2009. She was the daughter of Brig Gen Frank Weed, and was married to Brig Gen Robert C. Aloe. General Aloe was a former chapter Board member .

Natalie was an integral part of the chapter baking cookies for the VA Hospital since the mid 1980's. She was profiled in the May 2005 issue of The Lariat

Business Associate Program

The following Business Associate(s) have generously contributed to the MOAA Alamo Chapter enabling us to carry on our important mission. We encourage each of you to remember these important contributors in you business and your daily activities because we truly appreciate their support.

If your business or organization would like to join these much appreciated sponsors as a Business Associate of the MOAA Alamo Chapter, please contact David Walker at (210) 228-9955. Thank you for your consideration.

Spectrum Technologies, Inc
 Contact Don Shrum (210) 260-8781
www.spectrum-tx.com

Thanks for providing continuous back up service to the office computer



Grateful thanks to the following folks who have kindly donated to the Chapter in memory of Frank Parks:

Susan Middleton

Richard Vacek



Exec VP's Corner

We should be having an enjoyable October luncheon. It will take place at the Ft. Sam Houston Golf Club on October 22nd and our speaker will be the Honorable Senator Leticia Van de Putte.

Senator Van de Putte is one of the most supportive members of the Texas Legislature when it comes to military, veterans and family benefits. She is the chairman of the Senate Veteran's Affairs and Military Installations Committee that has been key in recent year in getting bills passed related to enhancements in educational benefits to the military and veteran in Texas, enhancements to medical and mental health assistance from the state, tax relief for disabled veterans and so on. I have asked that she speak to the achievements of this past session and to some of the things that we will be working on for the next legislative session. Unfortunately, I am not going to be able to attend as I will be going to the MOAA National meeting in San Diego. I will be representing the Texas Council and then our Chapter President; Ed Marvin will be joining me along with other Texas Chapters who have received the five star Chapter of Excellence awards.

I also wanted to take this opportunity to talk about LCDR Gil Rodriguez. Gil came to the Alamo Chapter several years ago and in a short time took over the task of coordinating the awarding of MOAA medals to deserving JROTC cadets from San Antonio area high schools.

Over the years this expanded each year until the Alamo Chapter has been presenting and awarding over fifty-five of these to JROTC Cadets and also to ROTC Cadets in five Colleges and Universities from San Antonio to Eagle Pass to Carrizo Springs to Laredo and Corpus Christi. This expanded this year to also include the "Gold Bar" program that presented the first gold bars of newly commissioned ROTC Cadets and a year's free membership in the National and Alamo MOAA Chapter. Gil spent innumerable hours in planning and coordinating this activity and organizing presenters at all of these schools.

In addition, Gil served as our Vice President – Administrative with the responsibility of working with our

Staff Consultant, the TOPS Officer, Special Activities Representative and the Advertising Coordinator for the Chapter.

All good things must come to an end, I guess. Gil and his wife, Andy have moved from San Antonio to Georgetown to begin a much deserved "real" retirement. Gil will continue to be a member of the Alamo Chapter, but has decided that he must really retire and enjoy his retirement to its fullest. As a result, he is giving up his wonderful service to the Chapter. Hopefully someone in the Chapter will come forward and continue on with his example and will continue to expand on what he has started.

I for one, want to give Gil a great big THANK YOU and wish him all the best because he has given his best to the Alamo Chapter.

Maj Jim Cunningham (Ret)

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Welcome New Members!

Happy Halloween!

COL Steve Kenney USA
 COL Darlene McCurdy USA
 COL Janice McKie-Green USA
 COL Kim Ramos USA
 Col David Rechkemmer USAF (Ret)
 COL Matt Schofield USA
 COL Art Stafford USA (Ret)
 LTC Thomas Crotty USA
 LTC Bernard Hebron USA
 LTC John Lamoureux USA
 LTC James Sall USA
 LTC Richard Webb USA
 MAJ Deb Chappel USA
 MAJ Chad Foster USA
 MAJ Chaplain Wayne Garcia USA
 MAJ William Godwin-Stremmer USA
 MAJ Mark Hoffpauir USA
 CPT Clement Bermudes USA
 CPT David Byrd USA
 CPT Michael Chambers USA
 CPT Wylie Clough USA
 CPT Daniel Comeaux USA
 CPT Joe Dominguez USA
 CPT Olympia George USA
 CPT Douglas Ingold USA
 CPT Maxwell Smith USA
 CPT Peter Stammersky USA
 1LT Thomas Costeira USA
 2LT Michael Bartol USA
 CW3 Rob Ripe USA
 CW3 Travis Singletary USA

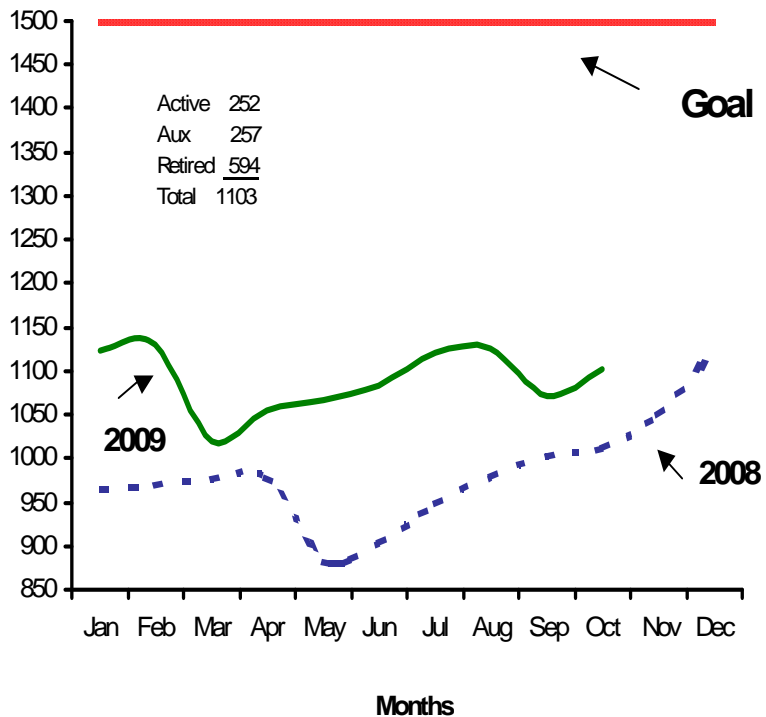
CW2 Robert Solorzano USA
 Mrs Helen Moore



August Luncheon speaker, Gen Gene Habiger with Chapter President Lt Col Ed Marvin
 Photo: Jim Cunningham

Alamo Chapter Membership

As of: September 15, 2009



President's Message

(Continued from Page 1)

MOAA mission is to advocate for our veterans, to work diligently to get their entitlements, and to insure they do not fall behind.

For November we are trying to get Jim Nier, Executive Director of the Texas Veterans Commission. Jim is well known to several of us at the chapter as well, and we honor and admire him for all the work he has done during his tenure helping the military community. We are hopeful that we will be successful in getting him onto our schedule.

In December we will be having our annual Christmas Dance on December 11th. It is a great date, not as close to Thanksgiving as it has been in the past, and we are encouraging each member to ask a friend, a neighbor or an associate to attend the party with you. We would like to build the attendance at the Christmas Party where people are in a festive mood celebrating the season. Please mark it on your calendar and attend if you can.

We have been successful of late in gaining new leadership personnel for your chapter. I want to acknowledge LtCol Fred Koechley as our new VP of Logistics, and we appreciate him stepping up and helping us. Fred also serves at the Retiree Affairs Office at Lackland AFB and will be a great help to our chapter. I might add that Frank Rohrbough and his brother Steve Rohrbough are heading up our 3rd Annual Golf Tournament which will be on March 26th. Golfers, please put that on your calendar as well.

Concluding my remarks this month, I would say as I mentioned earlier it has been a good year for our chapter, however we are excited about our annual planning session that will happen on a yet to be decided date in December. Our chapter secretary who is also the secretary of the Texas Council of Chapters, David Patrick will once again lead us in reviewing our strategic plan, updating and revising it as necessary, and placing our operational plans in line to support the MOAA

national strategic plan.

Please don't hesitate to let me or any of your leadership know of anything that we should incorporate in our planning because the timing is right to do that. We do love to hear from our members and please understand that we listen to every one of your comments. Your letters and phone calls to us are much appreciated. This is your chapter. The only reason for our existence is you.

Finally, I thank you so much for being a member and look forward to continuing to serve the chapter and the membership to the best of my ability. God Bless each of you and God Bless America.

LtCol Ed Marvin (Ret)

VA Hospital Christmas Decorating Project



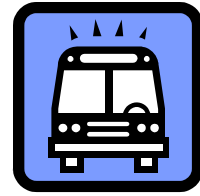
Mark Your Calendars

In the spirit of Christmas the chapter will again be decorating the Hospice Ward at the VA Hospital on Friday, December 4th at 9am.

Please call the office if you would like to participate in this wonderfully heartwarming event. Also, donations of Christmas decorations are always welcome.

(210) 228-9955

Texas Land & Tour Trips



11 Nov 2009 (Wednesday) Painted Churches of Schulenburg.

This guided tour of historic 1900's Czech and German Churches includes lunch, guides, refreshments and the deluxe coach. Cost \$75 pp - reserve by 1 Nov.

6 Dec 2009 (Sunday) Rockbox Theater Christmas Show.

The Rockbox is a live theater production that has been entertaining the Fredericksburg, Austin and San Antonio areas for the past 2 years. Good clean musical entertainment for the whole family. Trip includes lunch, show, refreshments and deluxe coach. Cost is \$90 pp - reserve by 28 Nov.

26-27-28 Feb 2010 (weekend) Cowboy Poets Gather in Alpine, Tx.

If you like cowboys, poetry and real cowboy songs, this trip is for you! No Rhinestone cowboys here. The Gathering will have more entertainment than you can attend. Poets/songsters from all over the West come to this event. Trip includes two evening performances you will never forget. We will bunk in Ft. Davis and listen and sing at Sul Ross University. Cost is \$345 double and \$440 single. Early planning is necessary and is limited to approximately 30 people.

Send checks: Texas Land & Tour Co, 357 Pike Road, San Antonio, TX 78209 or contact John Gibbs 822-7483



Legislative Update

Congress was in recess during August and was recently reconvened in early September. The Senate version of the FY2010 Defense Appropriations Bill was passed by the Senate Appropriations Committee September 10; the full Senate is expected to pass the bill shortly; the House has already passed its version.

The FY2010 Defense Authorization Bill has been passed in two different forms by the House and Senate and is currently at the Conference Committee stage. It is hoped that the Conference Committee can resolve differences in the two versions by the end of September, but the process can easily drag into later in the year. It is expected that the final FY2010 Defense Appropriations Bill will pass prior to the Authorizations Bill.

The Defense Authorization Bill (which is the responsibility of the House and Senate Armed Services Committees) includes the law changes needed to authorize troop levels, weapons procurement, new programs, and changes in pay and benefits (including pay raises, health care, concurrent receipt and survivor benefits).

The Defense Appropriations Bill (under the purview of the House and Senate Appropriations Committees) provides the funding to pay for the programs specified in the Authorization Bill. Congressional rules normally bar putting authorizing provisions in an appropriations bill, to make sure the legislators with the purse strings don't usurp the Armed Services Committees' authority.

On August 26th, a U.S. Court of Appeals upheld a ruling in favor of three military widows against the Government in regard to offsetting Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) benefits with VA Dependency and Indemnity Compen-

sation (DIC) benefits.

The Court ruled that the Veterans Benefits Act of 2003 restored eligibility for DIC to military surviving spouses who remarry after age 57. DOD had continued to apply the offset to these three widows and many others. The three widows argued that the plain meaning of the 2003 statute exempted them and any other widow who remarries after age 57 from the SBP/DIC offset. The Court agreed. In rejecting the government's improper offsets, the Court explained, "After all, the service member paid for both benefits: SBP payments with premiums; and DIC with his life."

The decision should also apply to other remarried widows impacted by the offset. In addition, the decision places increased pressure on Congress to end SBP/DIC offsets for all adversely affected widows. It remains to be seen whether the government will appeal the decision to the US Supreme Court.

This important case can only help in The Military Coalition's continuing crusade to repeal the SBP/DIC offset. In the interim the Nelson amendment to the Senate version of the FY2010 Defense Authorization Act would complete this action for all eligible widows and is currently under consideration by the House/Senate Armed Services conferees.

We are fortunate that MOAA has a great Washington legislative liaison staff which researches significant legislative issues and coordinates communications by MOAA membership so that we all speak accurately to Congress with one strong, coordinated voice. However, there are also many well-meaning individuals who urge us to contact Congress about military issues. Often, these efforts are not coor-

inated with MOAA efforts and sometimes the facts on which they are based are not accurate. Consequently, responding to these requests may have the effect of weakening the strength and credibility of MOAA's efforts. Accordingly, you are urged to carefully evaluate these requests before responding.

Col David Briggs AUS (Ret)
Texas Council of Chapters
VP Legislative

Funnies

The Walmart Greeter

A new retiree greeter at Wal-Mart, just couldn't seem to get to work on time. Every day he was 5, 10, 15 minutes late. But he was a good worker, really tidy, clean shaven, sharp minded and a real credit to the company and obviously demonstrating their 'Older Person Friendly' policies.

One day the boss called him into the office for a talk. "Charley, I have to tell you, I like your work ethic, you do a bang up job, but your being late so often is quite bothersome."

"Yes, I know boss, and I am working on it."

"Well good, you are a team player.. That's what I like to hear. It's odd though, your coming in late.. I know you're retired from the Armed Forces. What did they say if you came in late there?"

"They said, 'Good morning, General. Coffee this morning, sir?'"



Retiree Days

Retiree Appreciation Days are presently scheduled for October and November. The two Air Force Bases will be having their events in October and Ft Sam Houston will have their event in November. Here are some of the details:

Lackland/Brooks City Base - A Retiree Appreciation Day Informational Fair is being planned for Saturday, Oct 17, 2009 from 8am to 2pm at Mitchell Hall on Lackland AFB. The combined Lackland AFB and Brooks-City Base Retirees Activities Offices invites everyone to participate in this event. Gather information from Veteran agencies, on and off base agencies, and listen to a speaker on how BRAC will affect retirees. For further details, please contact the Airmen and Family Readiness Flight at 671-3722.

Randolph AFB will be holding their event on October 31 starting at 8am. As in years past, they will be having exhibits from various agencies and veterans groups as well as Jag and VA assistance.

Ft. Sam Houston's Retiree Appreciation Day will occur on November 7 beginning at 8am. Exhibitors from various veterans groups will be in attendance as well as medical groups at BAMC. At this time, normal flu shots should be available, however, the N1H1 (Swine Flu) may not be.

The featured speaker at the Ft. Sam Houston event will be Lt Col Shane Ostrom USAF (Ret), the Deputy Director of Benefits Information at the Military Officers Association in Alexandria, VA. His MOAA responsibilities include researching and writing articles and answering member inquiries regarding military benefits, health care, survivor issues, and financial concerns. He should have all of the latest information regarding Tricare and VA benefits.

Hopefully members will be able to attend one or all of these events as they are usually very enlightening.

Maj Jim Cunningham (Ret)



Solitaires



tributaries the Columbia and the Mississippi River. Some went to Minnesota while others went south to Oklahoma.

Rune stones are rock slabs which the Norsemen used to record time, place, and events. These markers were left on site, not only to record their presence, but to tell those who might follow what they found. The Kensington stones were found in Minnesota in November 1898 by a farmer plowing his field. Near a tree he found a slab with runic inscriptions encased in twisted tree roots.

The Heavener stones (about seven) were found in Oklahoma--all in a straight line. They have been dated between 600 and 900 AD. Time has worn down the inscriptions on the Heavener collection so that only a few runic symbols are recognizable.

In 1355 the king of Sweden sent a party to America. They never returned. Some rune stones have been found dated 1312 which describe Norsemen's expeditions. Although Christopher Columbus did not touch Central America until his third expedition, his writings convinced most Europeans that the world was round and there was another continent between Europe and Asia. Amerigo Vespucci (1454-1512) was an Italian explorer, navigator, and cartographer. America was named for him because of his detailed letters and writings. The naming of America is attributed to a German cartographer, Martin Waldseemuller. He read the vivid account Vespucci had written to friends about the new land. These were widely disseminated through Europe. When he made his new map, Waldseemuller called the new land America.
(Continued on Page 9)

We Solitaires honor our veterans and their sacrifices. Twice we have met to tie the red velvet loops which will grace their graves at the Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery on Veteran's Day.

Our nimble fingers have tied about 3,000 loops thus far. It is a worthy project of the Red Bows Inc. group. Their goal is to have a ribbon on every grave come Veteran's Day. Hopefully other groups in other cities will share in this worthwhile commemoration of our heroes and decorate graves in their cities.

In 1492 Columbus crossed the ocean blue. Remember that rhyme from grade school? It was to help us remember who discovered America. But was it true?

Historians and archeologists have disproven that myth. Amerigo Vespucci has erroneously been ceded that honor. It appears that it should really have gone to the early Vikings. As near as can be verified historically, Eric the Red was the first European to land on North American soil. He named the land Vinland (Newfoundland today). Eric the Red (so called because of his red hair and beard) was banished from Norway because of a few homicides he is said to have committed. He took his family to Iceland. Being a nomad and sailor he sailed up to Greenland one summer. He chanced on a warm cove and established a colony.

Leif Ericson, son of Eric the Red, followed in his father's footsteps, also being accused of murder. He was banished from Iceland for three years. So Leif went to Greenland. From there he explored west to America. It is believed that he and some of his followers went west either along Hudson Bay or south to the St. Lawrence River following its

Health, Benefits & Welfare

Roadside Assistance: Did you know? Your Texas driver's license has a phone number on the back, just above the bar > code on the lower left side: 1-800-525-5555. (It's in VERY SMALL PRINT, but it IS there.) This number can be called for emergency assistance on the highway or wherever you might have trouble while in your car. A service truck will be sent to you. This service is state operated and paid for with your tax dollars. If you are ever stranded, just call the number on your driver's license...help is on the way. A state trooper will be sent to make sure all is well.

Recognizing a Stroke: Sometimes symptoms of a stroke are difficult to identify. Now doctors say a bystander can recognize a stroke by asking four simple questions:

S *Ask the individual to SMILE.

T *Ask the person to TALK and speak a simple sentence (Coherently) (i.e. It is sunny out today.)

R *Ask him or her to raise both arms. Have person do this with their eyes closed or they compensate when they see one arm is not equal to the other.

S * Ask the person to 'stick' out his tongue.. If the tongue is 'crooked', if it goes to one side or the other, that is also an indication of a stroke.

If he or she has trouble with ANY ONE of these tasks, call emergency number immediately and describe the symptoms to the dispatcher.

New Access to Care (ATC) Rules: The leadership of the Military Health System wants beneficiaries to access healthcare services in a timely manner. As part of this effort, effective 1 October, 2009, TRICARE Prime beneficiaries will be required to access primary care within 30 minutes drive time from their official residence to their Primary Care Manager's (PCM) office.

Beneficiaries living more than 30 minutes from their PCM must sign and return the ATC waiver, mailed to the beneficiary by Humana, to remain enrolled to their current PCM or to be assigned to their requested PCM.

Beneficiaries living within forty miles of Brooke Army Medical Center will receive priority consideration for PCM assignment to the hospital; however beneficiaries living within the 40 mile radius but more than 30 minutes drive time from the hospital must sign and return the ATC waiver, mailed by Humana, to remain enrolled or receive PCM assignment at BAMC.

Beneficiaries living beyond the 40 mile radius will be assigned a civilian network PCM within 30 minutes of their official residence
POC for this information is Ludlow Ball at 210-221-4699

Source: BAMC Tricare Liaison

National Resource Directory: The directory is an online tool for wounded, ill and injured Service Members, Veterans, their families, and those who support them. It provides access to more than 11,000 services and resources at the national, state and local levels to support recovery, reha-

bilitation and community reintegration.

(www.nationalresourcedirectory.gov)

Source: VA Central Record

COLA 2010 Update 07: Rep. Carolyn McCarthy (D-NY) introduced 8 SEP 09 legislation that, if passed, ensures retirees will receive a cost-of-living-adjustment (COLA) in 2010. Under the current guidelines, social security recipients are not scheduled to receive any COLA next year. The Social Security COLA Fix for 2010 Act (H.R.3536) will help seniors offset the rising costs that they face by providing them with a one-time \$150 payment in lieu of the Social Security COLA. Social Security COLAs are based on inflation, and since inflation did not increase in 2009, Social Security payments are expected to remain at the same levels in 2010 as they have been in 2009. While inflation may not have gone up since last year, costs for seniors, especially their healthcare costs, are increasing. According to McCarthy's office, Medicare Part B costs, for example, have gone up by an average of 7.8% over the last five years and are projected to rise in 2010 by as much as 9%. Seniors also largely live off investment income, many of which have seen staggering hits as a result of the economic downturn.

The lack of a Social Security COLA increase in 2010 would affect over 50 million individuals who receive Social Security checks, says McCormick's office. The 2010 Social Security projections represent the first year without a COLA increase since the automatic Social Security COLA adjustments began in 1975. "I have been hearing from many seniors in my district who are concerned about not getting a COLA in 2010. Seniors rely on these payments and with the (Continued on Page 9)

Health, Benefits & Welfare

(Continued from Page 8)

increasing costs of healthcare coupled with hits to their investments, America's seniors are being shortchanged. This bill will help provide some relief to millions of Americans," said Rep. McCarthy. While most federal retirees and their survivors who receive Social Security would benefit from the bill -- if it passes -- about 200,000 federal annuitants, covered by CSRS and other systems, who are not eligible to receive Social Security benefits would not, according to the National Archive and Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE).

Source: My Federal Retirement Newsletter 14 Sep 09

New VA Clinic

The US Dept of Veterans Affairs opened a new outpatient clinic on San Antonio's south side.

South Texas Veterans Health Care System Director Marie Weldon officially unveiled the new clinic on Aug 26. The VA opened the new clinic as a way to serve the health care needs of veterans living on the South Side.

Audie Murphy Memorial Veterans Hospital, San Antonio's primary provider of healthcare benefits to local vets, is located in the South Texas Medical Center in Northwest San Antonio.

The new clinic is located at 4610 Southcross Blvd.

Source: San Antonio Business Journal

NATIONAL GUARD RETIREMENT GUIDE:

The U.S. Army has published the first Retirement Guide for National Guard Soldiers and Families. The 56-page Army National Guard Information Guide on Non-Regular Retirement was written for anyone with an interest in how a member of the Army National Guard can earn retirement points credit, qualify for retired pay for non-regular service and apply for retired pay. It is the re-

sult of a collaboration between the Army G-1 Retirement Services Division, part of the G-1's Human Resources Policy Directorate, and the Army National Guard. The rules, links, and references covered therein are not the definitive answer on any subject. All are subject changes in laws, directives, regulations and the determinations of the offices and agencies responsible for the information assembled and presented here. For matters concerning individual Retirement Points Accounting, contact the RPAM Administrator (Retirement Points Accounting Management Administrator) for the state in which the Soldier is a member or held membership. For specific determinations of retirement eligibility, the RPAM Administrator can refer questions to Human Resources Command - St Louis (HRC-St Louis). The guide can be viewed at

www.armyg1.army.mil/rso/docs/ARReserveRetirementGuide.doc.

Source: Army Echoes Sep-Dec 09

VA AIDS Care Update

The VA has announced that it will begin routinely offering HIV tests to all veterans who receive care at its medical facilities. Under the new policy, veterans must verbally consent to the test. However, they can opt to decline being tested. The new policy follows recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control, which advised that all patients should be offered HIV testing even if they are not considered at risk.

Source: NAUS Weekly Update 11 Sep 09

Mobilized Reserve

The Department of Defense announced the current number of reservists on active duty as of 8 SEP 09. The net collective result is 887 more reservists mobilized than last reported in the Bulletin for 15 AUG 09.

At any given time, services may activate some units and individuals while deactivating others, making it possible for these figures to either increase or decrease.

The total number currently on active

duty from the Army National Guard and Army Reserve is 111,710; Navy Reserve, 6,528; Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve, 15,740; Marine Corps Reserve, 8,676; and the Coast Guard Reserve, 646.

This brings the total National Guard and Reserve personnel who have been activated to 143,300, including both units and individual augmentees.

A cumulative roster of all National Guard and Reserve personnel who are currently activated can be found at <http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Sep2009/d20090908ngr.pdf>.

Source: DoD News Release Sep 09

Solitaires

(Continued from Page 6)

However, most people remembered Columbus voyages so 12 October was declared Columbus Day, a national holiday. The Italians, claiming a native son, celebrate with parades and parties.

The Solitaires meetings in October will be 6 October at the Fort Sam Golf Club and 25 October at the Randolph Parr club.

References: Biographies of Leif Ericson, Christopher Columbus and Americus Vespucci.

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.

VETERANS WAR MEMORIAL OF TEXAS



Some dreams take longer than others to come to pass, and the dream of the completion of the Veterans War Memorial is making progress, but has still not been completed. This beautiful, unique memorial to honor & recognize the 1.3 million Americans who have sacrificed their lives for our nation is still a work in progress.

The 3.5 acre complex located in McAllen, Texas has been an on-going project & dream for retired Army Colonel Frank Plummer & his executive committee since 1989. Upon completion, the circular complex will be surrounded by 105 flags on granite pedestals, which are guardian sites. At the very center of the memorial will be a 105 ft. granite spire which will come up through the ceiling of the memorial building itself. Surrounding the building are 5 war sites; World War I, World War II, Korean War, Vietnam War, & All Wars. To date, the World War II, Korean, & Vietnam War sections are complete. The All Wars & World War I sites are currently under construction.

The World War II site contains 8 granite walls containing the story of the war, maps and history pertaining to this war & time period. Also in this section are the Submariners history wall, the Escuadron 201 wall, the Brand history wall, the cities of PSJA, Mission, and Hidalgo, which honor their citizens who have served our country. Three beautiful bronze statues are also in the World War II section; The Warrior statue and two of the Women of History statues, an Army WAC, and a Navy Wave. Within the

World War II Site is also The Hispanic Medal of Honor Plaza which has the pictures and information regarding the 39 Hispanic Medal of Honor recipients beginning with the Civil War and extending through the Vietnam War. Adjoining this is the Texas Medal of Honor Wall which contains the names of the 75 recipients from Texas.

The Korean War site contains the Korean War history wall, the U.S. Combat Casualties in Korea wall, the Bentsen family history wall, City of Mercedes wall, Catholic War Veterans Post 770 wall. The history wall contains bronze panels depicting scenes from the war. A World War II woman Marine statue stands proudly saluting along the walkway leading to the Korean War site.

The Vietnam War site contains the history of the Vietnam War on an 8 sided granite wall as well as the 173rd Airborne Texas wall, Major U.S. Combat Casualties in Vietnam wall, Texas KIA in Vietnam wall, and a statue of Lt. General James Hollingsworth.



The All Wars site which is currently under construction will contain walls of honor & historical facts from the discovery of our country to our current war on terror.

The memorial is landscaped with local & tropical plants and trees which will provide shade & add to the beauty of the site. On Veterans Day, Pearl Harbor Day & Memorial Day programs are held at the Memorial which always draw large crowds of patriotic people.

Five walkways lead to the center of the complex and separate the sections which are called, Army Way, Navy Way, Marine Corps Way, and Coast Guard Way. The entire complex is paved with small bricks and large brick pavers containing the names of people who have served, are currently serving our country, or messages of thanks & gratitude.

The memorial building will sit directly in the center of the complex and be round with a roofline resembling an eagle's wings in flight. Inside will be a chapel dedicated to the four chaplains on board the USS Dorchester who gave their lives to save others as the ship sank during WWII.

The design of the building is to provide an educational experience for all; but especially school children. Computer screens with facts & stories from all conflicts and wars will be available to teach about our nation's hard won freedom.

So far the Memorial has been built with the aid of donations from both private citizens and clubs, civic organizations, and companies along with some grants.

Anyone who would like more information can contact Col. Frank Plummer at (956)631-2511 or Jan Hartzog, Publicity Director, at (956) 605-3486. All donations are tax deductible. To see a virtual tour of the Veterans War Memorial log onto www.mcallen.net/veterans.



Source: Publicity Director, War Memorial of Texas

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Benefits of Membership of MOAA and the local chapter

- 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.
- 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 Options:

1. Active Duty, National Guard and Reserve officers of all services, who are not past or present members of MOAA national are eligible for a one year **free** national and local MOAA (MOAA-AC) membership.
2. Retired Officers or Auxiliary (surviving spouses), who are not past or present members of MOAA national, can receive a 2 year membership for \$28.00 (which is the usual annual membership rate). You will then receive a one year local MOAA-AC membership **free**.
3. Those already members of MOAA national need to complete this application to receive a 1 year **free** local membership to MOAA-AC.

Normal Dues: MOAA national \$28 per year, MOAA local \$25.00 (Auxiliary \$15)

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, or 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 being active in chapter volunteer activity? _____

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 applications 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.**

8-12-09

Luncheon Speaker Bio



Senator
Leticia Van de Putte

Senator Leticia Van de Putte, a pharmacist for more than 29 years, represents a large portion of San Antonio and Bexar County.

A former-five term state representative, she is now serving her fourth term as a Texas State Senator for District 26. She is a strong advocate for children, veterans, quality public education and has consistently authored and sponsored bills aimed at improving economic opportunities for all Texans.

She has been recognized by the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) Edward R. Roybal Award, the Vietnam Veterans of America "Legislator of the Year Award," the Texas Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) Committee "Department of Defense Exceptional Support Award" and the Center for Policy Alternatives "Arthur S. Fleming Leadership Award" for her tireless advocacy on behalf of the people she represents.

Following the 81st Legislative Session, she was chosen as one of Texas Insider's Top Ten Legislators for her work on behalf of veterans and their families and for Texas Watch's Legislative Honor Roll for her work on behalf of Texas consumers and homeowners. She is the subject of a new

book written by Dr. Sharon Navarro titled, "Latina Legislator: Leticia Van de Putte and the Road to Leadership." Nationally, Senator Van de Putte served as co-chair of the 2008 Democratic National Convention, joining the ranks of Texas women, including Barbara Jordan and Ann Richards. She has been actively involved in the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL), serving as President from 2006 to 2007.

Senator Van de Putte is a member of the National Hispanic Caucus of State Legislators, where she served as President from 2003 to 2005.

Senator Van de Putte currently serves as Chair of the Veteran Affairs and Military Installations Committee, and serves as a member of the Senate Committees on Education, State Affairs and Business and Commerce. She is also the Chair of the Texas Senate Democratic Caucus.

The Senator was a Kellogg Fellow at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government in 1993. She received her Bachelor of Science from the University of Texas at Austin, College of Pharmacy, and she is a 1973 graduate of Thomas Jefferson High School in San Antonio, Texas.

Senator Van de Putte currently lives in San Antonio with her husband of 31 years, Pete, and has six great children: Nichole, Vanessa, Henry, Gregory, Isabella, and Paul. She is also the proud grandmother of two adorable grandsons, Julian Claiborne and Jove Sebastian Stiles.

Source: www.leticiavandeputte.com

Medical Minute



ODD ASSOCIATIONS

A number of odd connections exist between body parts and the Cardiovascular system.

EARLOBE CREASES: People with a diagonal crease or dent on one or both earlobes have a higher than average chance of developing heart disease.

BALDNESS: Heart disease is somewhat more common in men who begin losing their hair early.

GRAY HAIR: Premature graying has been linked to heart disease.

LEG LENGTH: The longer your legs the lower your risk of heart disease.

SHORT STATURE: Adults who are on the short side are more likely to develop heart disease and tend to have a higher risk of atrial fibrillation.

MIGRAINE: Heart disease is more common in migraine sufferers.

Source: *September 09 Harvard Health Letter*

Chapter Events Calendar

OCTOBER

- 1 Volunteer Hours Due*
- 1 Staff Meeting 9am MOAA-AC Office*
- 5-11 VA Hospital Creative Arts Festival**
- 6 Solitaire's Luncheon 11am Ft Sam Houston Golf Club House**
- 7 Board Meeting 10am MOAA-AC Offices*
- 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 Ft Sam Golf Club**
- 25 Solitaire's Brunch 11am Randolph Parr O Club**
- 27 Extravaganza Sam Houston Club (Ft Sam Newcomers Welcome)*
- 31 RetireeDay Randolph AFB 8am**
- 31 VA Bikers Rally 10am**

NOVEMBER

- 2 Volunteer Hours Due*
- 2-5 AFCEA Technology Symposium Recruitment Drive*
- 3 Solitaire's Luncheon 11am Ft Sam Houston Golf Club**
- 3 Election Day - Fly the Flag!**
- 5 Staff Meeting 9am MOAA-AC Office*
- 7 Retiree Day Ft Sam Houston**
- 10 Marine Corps Birthday**
- 11 Veterans' Day - Fly the Flag!**
- 18 Ft Sam Volunteer Advisory Council Mtg 9am*
- 19 Chapter Luncheon Randolph Parr O Club**
- 22 Solitaire's Brunch 11 am Randolph Parr O Club**
- 24 Extravaganza Sam Houston Club (Ft Sam Newcomers Welcome)*
- 26 Thanksgiving - Fly the Flag!**

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

DECEMBER

- TBD Annual Planning Meeting*
- 1 Volunteer Hours Due*
- 3 Staff Meeting 9am MOAA-AC Office*
- 4 Decorate VA Hospital Hospice Ward 9am**
- 5 Solitaire's Pot Luck Luncheon at Linda Gayer's House**
- 7 Pearl Harbor Day**
- 11 Christmas Dinner Dance Randolph Parr O Club**
- 25 Christmas Day - Fly the Flag!**

AMERICAN RED CROSS - FORT SAM HOUSTON

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Volunteer at Fort Sam Houston, Lackland AFB or Randolph AFB

Get to Know Us before you need us.

Classes offered at FSH Red Cross Bldg 26550

CFAS (CPR, First Aid and AED), Babysitting and more.

Other classes offered at various locations.

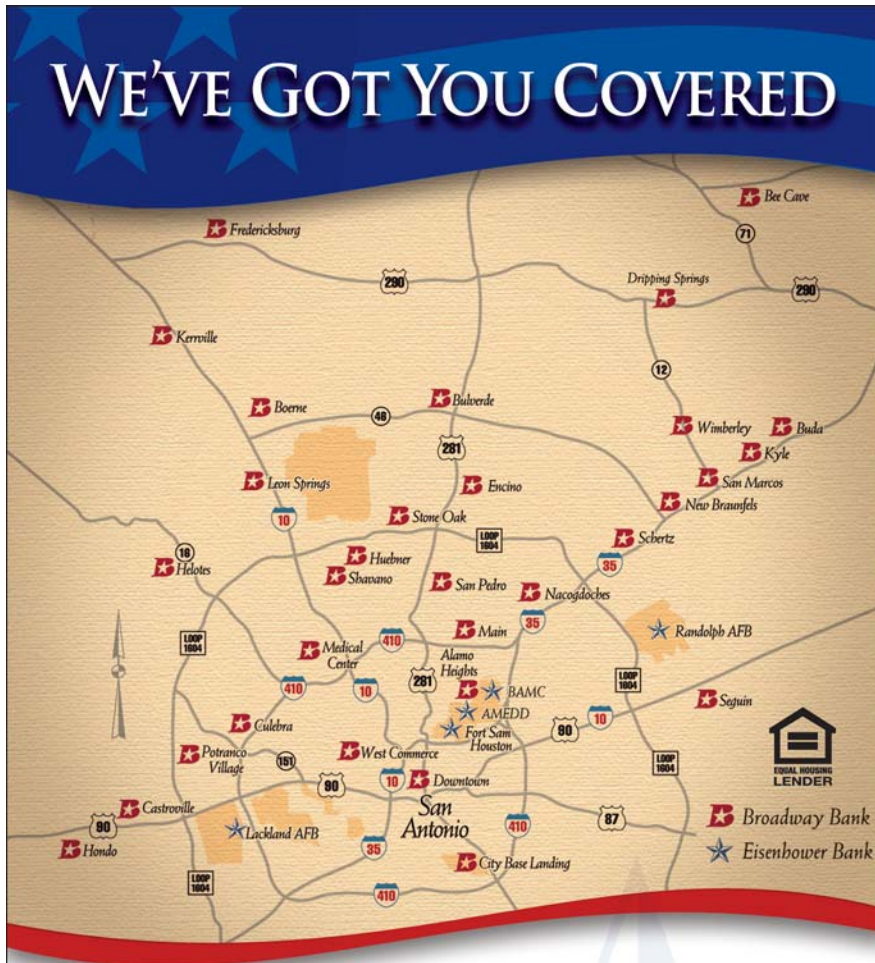
Call 210-221-3355 for class information or to volunteer.

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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.

MOAA-AC P.O. Box 8037 San Antonio, TX 78208
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ALAMO CHAPTER

MISSION STATEMENT

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
NATIONAL LEVELS.

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WE'RE ON THE WEB:

WWW.ALAMOMOAA.ORG

**Postmaster — please deliver by October 3rd
Time Sensitive Material**

Thursday October 22nd, 2009

**Chapter Luncheon &
Annual Business Meeting**

Speaker:

Senator Leticia Van de Putte

Chair of the Veteran Affairs and Military Installations Committee

Ft Sam Houston Golf Club

Social Hour begins 11am

Lunch served 11:45am

Menu

London Broil, Oven Roasted Potatoes

Green Beans Almondine, Salad, Rolls with butter

Rainbow Sherbert

Water, Coffee & Tea service & \$3 wine glass honor bar

Price: \$14.00

Enclosed: \$ _____

RSVP By noon Monday, October 19th

Reservations not cancelled by noon Tuesday Oct 20th 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 Ft Sam Houston Golf Club

The Golf Club is located at 1050 Harry Wurzbach Road, San Antonio, about a mile before the Harry Wurzbach gate of Ft Sam Houston. (210) 221-5863.