

MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA ALAMO CHAPTER



THE



LARIAT

Volume 40, Number 1

“Five Star ★★★★★ Chapter”

January 2020

HAPPY ★ NEW ★ YEAR



President's Message

Hello, everyone and welcome to 2020.

What a year we have ahead of us! The Chapter is moving forward on many fronts to continue to be the best for you. We continue to be recognized by MOAA as a 5-Star Level of Excellence Chapter. Our many activities and programs are applauded throughout the San Antonio community. We've expanded our “reach” through the establishment of satellites at Blue Skies of Texas and the Army Residence Community. We are working with folks in Austin for the formation of a satellite for our state capital area.

These accomplishments are not the efforts of one or even a few people. Our Chapter needs to get more folks

involved to continue to meet its vision and mission. The vision is “to be the primary advocate for the military community.” Here's the mission.

“The MOAA-Alamo Chapter mission is to:

- ◇ Provide information support and social engagement to members;
- ◇ Offer programs and services for the common good of the military community;
- ◇ Support MOAA at the national, state and local levels with a powerful voice.”

To accomplish this vision and mission, it takes a team (or village depending

(Continued on Page 6)

Save The Date

February 19

Happy Hour 4-6pm
Petroleum Club

March 26

The Big Give - South Texas

June 26

Summer Celebration
Dinner Dance
Petroleum Club

October 16

13th Annual Golf Tournament
River Crossing Golf Club 1pm

December 17

Christmas Luncheon
Ft Sam Golf Club

Inside This Edition:

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Chapter President Kitty Meyers with Michael Gilliam, CEO for the San Antonio Lighthouse for the Blind, speaker at December's Christmas Luncheon.

(See also Choir pic on Page 9)

2020 Scholarship Program



The Alamo Chapter Scholarship program for 2020 is now available. Scholarships totaling \$20,000 will be awarded to JROTC cadets, college ROTC cadets, and a dependent of a military member.

See the application on our website www.AlamoMoaa.org and spread the word to those who may know of eligible students.

Please note, the deadline is 15 Jan 2020 per the application instructions.

Contact our Awards and Scholarships Committee Chairman, Col (ret) Pete Hunt, by email at moaa.ac.award@gmail.com or 210-867-0418 if you have questions.

Good luck to the students, cadets and future MOAA members!

TAPS

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

Col Joseph P. Deponce USA (Ret)
12/4/19

Virginia Regan
12/5/19

Spouse of LTC Joseph Regan USA (Ret)

CDR Harold Risener USN (Ret)
12/18/19

Blue Skies Satellite Chapter Meeting Feb 10

Gail Joyce will be the speaker at the Blue Skies Satellite Chapter meeting on **10 Feb 2020**.

It will be an dinner event with meet n greet starting at 5pm in the Road Runner Room of Blue Skies West.

All Blue Skies Residents and Alamo Chapter members are welcome to attend (sign up early— space is limited!)

Cost per person \$24

To register please visit the Alamo Chapter website at www.AlamoMoaa.org.

The Retired Military Spouses Club Luncheon

Monday, Jan 27th

Ft. Sam Houston Golf Club



TJ Dolotina

of

Crooning To The Classics

will present his program

TJ performs classic hits from the 40's, 50's, 60's and 70's. with the look, style and passion of the artists he covers

RSVP to: 210-822-6559

Or

Lbraswell2@satx.rr.com
by noon on Jan 22, 2020



Thank You!

to each of our members listed below who have donated a little (or a lot!) to either the Scholarship Fund, Chapter Operations, or both!

We really appreciate it—and every dollar helps!

LtCol Virginia Alloway USAF (Ret)

LTC Sean Blaydon USA (Fmr)

LtCol Wanda Carter USAF (Ret)

LtCol Catherine Dikcis USAF (Ret)

Col Dean Hartman USAF

CAPT Bill Knehans USN (Ret)

Aurelia Korte

LtCol David Marx USN (Ret)

Col Shane Ostrom USAF (Ret)

Helga Parks

Col David Patrick USAF (Ret)

COL Norbert Picha USA (Ret)

LtCol Bill Render USAF (Ret)

Col Sanford Richardson USAF (Ret)

COL Michael Rogers USA (Ret)

Col Karen Stocks USAF (Ret)

LtCol Mark Sweeney USAF (Ret)

MAJ Scott Tighe USAR

LtCol Ralph Williams USAF (Ret)

LTC Machielle Woods USA (Ret)

LtCol Thomas Young USAF (Ret)



Would you like to help shape and move the chapter forward??

If so, please feel free to join us at our next regular monthly Chapter Leadership Meeting on the first Thursday of each month at 10am at the chapter office on JBSA Ft Sam Houston.

(Note - January's meeting has been moved to the 9th.)

2020 Alamo Chapter Scholarships and Awards!!!

Every year, the Alamo Chapter honors outstanding high school and college students with our wide-ranging scholarships and awards programs. These initiatives support our mission of providing for the common good of our military community while addressing our priority of increasing membership.

The scholarship program supports high school Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) cadets and college-level ROTC cadets in the Alamo Chapter catchment area of South Texas. This year's eligible college ROTC cadets are in their junior year of school and will be commissioned as military officers. Winners are selected by their respective Professor of Aerospace Science (PAS), Professor of Military Science (PMS) and Professor of Naval Science (PNS) based on the Alamo Chapter Scholarship Committee criteria.

For 2020, we will award \$20,000 in scholarships to outstanding cadets and midshipmen at the following universities:

- Army ROTC: UT-San Antonio, St Mary's University, Texas A&M Kingsville, Texas A&M Corpus Christi, UT-Rio Grande Valley, Texas State University and UT-Austin
- Air Force ROTC: UT-San Antonio, Texas State University, UT-Austin
- Navy ROTC: UT-Austin

In addition to the ROTC scholarships, the Chapter selects one recipient for the MAJ James and Cheryl Cunningham Alamo Chapter Scholarship, named in honor of our immediate past president and awarded to the outstanding high school senior who is a dependent of an active Chapter member. The scholarship application is open and available on the Chapter website!

Along with the scholarship program, the Chapter represents MOAA at nearly 130 JROTC and ROTC awards ceremonies, most of which are held from March through May. Prior to the programs, we send each unit a MOAA medal and certificate for the winning cadet. For the ceremony itself, we solicit Chapter members to present the awards in person at each event, along with representatives of many other veteran's service organizations.

In order to fund our scholarships and awards, we rely upon fundraising and donations, since Chapter dues or other operational funds are not utilized for these programs. We have three separate funding streams for the scholarship program, the first of which is our annual golf tournament. Our golf committee does a marvelous job in producing a great event for us. Second, we accept donations throughout the year for the scholarship fund and recently established Alamo Chapter Educational Fund, a 501(c)3 foundation accessible on the Chapter website at www.alamomoaa.org/donate. All donations are tax deductible! Finally, we have partnered again this year with San Antonio's annual "Big Give" online charitable event (www.thebigivesa.org). This event will occur in March 2020, so please be prepared for this event as well. We will be blasting emails and Facebook notices to you to sign in on the "Big Give" website and donate to the Chapter's Foundation. All monies raised go to the scholarships.

All members are invited to our Annual Scholarship Luncheon on March 26, 2020 at the Ft Sam Houston Golf Course. Come on out to recognize our scholarship winners.

Anyone interested in supporting the awards ceremonies at your local high school (or college alma mater), should contact our Scholarship and Awards Committee Chairman, Col (ret) Pete Hunt at: moaa.ac.awards@gmail.com or 210-867-0418.

As always, THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

Kathryn "Kitty" Meyers
Chapter President

Membership Memos

THANK YOU Renewing Members:	NEVER STOP SERVING!	State of Texas Benefits
RADM Clare Helminiak USPHS (Ret) CAPT Gene Carnicom USPHS (Ret) Col Michael Connors USAF (Ret) CAPT James Cosby USN (Ret) CAPT Bill Knehans USN (Ret) Col Daniel Murphy USAF (Ret) Col Shane Ostrom USAF (Ret) Col David Patrick USAF (Ret) COL John Pavlovsky USA (Ret) COL Norbert Picha USA (Ret) Col Sanford Richardson USAF (Ret) COL Michael Rogers USA (Ret) Col Gary Salmans USAF (Ret) Col Robert Snodgrass USAF (Ret) Col Karen Stocks USAF (Ret) LTC Ed Bryan III USA (Ret) LtCol Wanda Carter USAF (Ret) LTC Edmund Cunningham USA (Ret) LtCol Catherine Dikeis USAF (Ret) LtCol Thomas Gaj USAF (Ret) LtCol Robert Guerra USAF (Ret) LTC Sean Hipp USA LtCol David Marx USN (Ret) LtCol Mark Sweeney USAF (Ret) LTC Ralph Talbot USA (Ret) LtCol Thomas Young USAF (Ret) Maj George Lindquist USAF (Ret) Helga Parks	<div data-bbox="704 359 898 611" data-label="Image"> </div> <p data-bbox="641 667 980 716">WE NEED <u>YOU</u></p> <p data-bbox="656 730 966 827">TO VOLUNTEER for positions on your Chapter Leadership Team</p> <p data-bbox="639 856 980 890">(Member spouses welcome!)</p> <p data-bbox="704 951 915 984">Current Needs:</p> <ol data-bbox="581 993 1036 1314" style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Secretary (No minute taking required) 2) Surviving Spouse Coordinator 3) Membership Cmte Members 4) Advertising Cmte Members 5) Community Outreach Members 6) Historian 7) Active Duty Liaison 8) Editor 	<p data-bbox="1052 348 1354 382">Specialty License Plates</p> <p data-bbox="1052 382 1500 625"><i>Provided by: Texas Dept. of Motor Vehicles: Specialty License Plates</i> Many military and Veteran specialty license plates are available to Texas Veterans including Disabled Veteran, Former Prisoner of War, Pearl Harbor Survivor, Purple Heart, Retiree, and Medal of Honor plates.</p> <p data-bbox="1052 657 1273 690">Parking Placards</p> <p data-bbox="1052 690 1500 779"><i>Provided by: Texas Dept. of Motor Vehicles: Disabled Parking, Placards and Plates</i> Disabled parking placards entitle Veterans with qualifying service-connected disabilities to park in any disabled parking space and exempt them from the payment of a fee or penalty imposed by a governmental unit for parking at a meter. Parking placards are available to any Veteran who possesses a disabled license plate.</p> <p data-bbox="1052 1087 1321 1121">Texas Driver License</p> <p data-bbox="1052 1121 1516 1486"><i>Provided by: Texas Dept. of Public Safety: Veteran Services</i> Texas Drivers Licenses are furnished free of charge to Veterans with qualifying service-connected disabilities (this fee waiver does not apply to commercial licenses). Texas Veterans, both those Veterans living in state and out, can have a "Veteran" designation on the face of their drivers license by providing proof of discharge or disability to TxDPS.</p>
	<p data-bbox="602 1392 1016 1518">Current Membership Stats</p> <p data-bbox="623 1608 997 1887">Active Duty 279 Surviving Spouse 163 Former Military 26 <u>Retired 696</u> Total 1164</p>	<p data-bbox="1052 1520 1403 1554">Texas State Park Admission</p> <p data-bbox="1052 1554 1516 1734"><i>Provided by: Texas Parks & Wildlife: State Park Admission</i> The State Parklands Passport provides free admission to Texas State Parks for Veterans with qualifying service-connected disabilities.</p> <p data-bbox="1052 1766 1403 1799">Hunting & Fishing Licenses</p> <p data-bbox="1052 1799 1500 1950"><i>Provided by: Texas Parks & Wildlife: Hunting & Fishing Licenses</i> Veterans with qualifying service-connected disabilities are eligible to (Continued on Page 7)</p>

'We Did It': Military Widows, Supporters Celebrate After Senate NDAA Vote



Lt. Gen. Dana Atkins, USAF (Ret), President and CEO of MOAA, stands with Candace Wheeler, Senior Advisor for Policy and Legislation for the Tragedy Assistance Program

for Survivors, and military widows Kristy DiDomenico, Edie Smith and Capt. Kathy Thorp, USN (Ret), during a reception to celebrate the repeal of the SBP-DIC offset in Washington, D.C. on Dec. 17.

Military widows hugged and shared thumbs-up gestures as they embraced each other, celebrating a surreal moment nearly two decades in the making.

Just hours after the Senate approved the FY 20 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) on Dec. 17, military widows gathered in Washington, D.C., to mark the expected repeal of the "widows tax" with federal lawmakers and representatives of veterans service organizations.

Efforts to repeal the Survivor Benefit Plan-Dependency and Indemnity Compensation offset, commonly called the widows tax, had been rejected at various points in the legislative process at least a dozen times, so widows were used to disappointing news. MOAA has been engaged with this offset since the inception of the Survivor Benefit Plan in 1972 – picking up support along the way and making incremental gains while Rep. Joe Wilson (R-S.C.) continued to support legislation for total repeal since his arrival in Congress in 2001. But 2019 was different.

"We did it," said Capt. Kathy Thorp, USN (Ret), embracing fellow military widow Kristy DiDomenico.

Year after year, military widows have met with lawmakers to share their deeply personal stories of being penalized by the government's SBP-DIC offset after the loss of their spouse. But this week, Congress took a historic step to repeal the offset by including a provision in ending it in the NDAA, which is headed to President Donald Trump for his expected signature.

"Today is a banner day," Thorp said. "I do believe all of our husbands are up there saluting us. I think all of our husbands and wives that have gone before us and served our country - this is a wonderful way that we have honored them and I know they're proud of us."

Repealing the offset has been a top priority for MOAA for several years. More than 150 members of the association pushed for passage of the repeal during its annual Storming the Hill event, when members meet with federal lawmakers on Capitol Hill to discuss advocacy missions.

Lt. Gen. Dana Atkins, USAF (Ret), President and CEO of MOAA, said it was imperative to get the repeal passed

to take care of servicemembers and their families. The offset became personal to Atkins in 2011, when he was serving in the Air Force and Maj. David Brodeur, his executive officer, was killed in Afghanistan, leaving behind a wife and two young children.

The devotion of the widows inspired MOAA to stay on top of the legislation, pushing Congress for the repeal, he said.

"The inclusion of the widows tax repeal in the NDAA was only possible through a persistent, unified voice," Atkins said. "MOAA's 350,000 members have advocated aggressively in support of repeal, and we have worked in sync with fellow veteran service organizations."

The measure passed through the House of Representatives by a large majority, but advocates knew the Senate would be trickier since there was concern over the cost of the repeal.

Sen. Doug Jones (D-Ala.), who co-sponsored legislation to repeal the offset with Sen. Susan Collins (R-Maine), led an effort for a motion to instruct vote in September, asking the NDAA conferees to include the provision in its final draft. That vote passed 94-0, the provision made the final-cut, and Jones said he was pleased when Senators approved

(Continued on Page 6)

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President's Message

(Continued from Page 1)

upon your perspective). I've spoken in past articles about opportunities for you to get involved. Here are a few of the opportunities.

- Board membership either the Chapter Board or the Educational Foundation Board - quarterly meetings for each Board providing governance and oversight for the respective function.
- Membership on any of the committees.
- Membership – promotes Chapter and MOAA membership at various recruiting events
- Advertising (Marketing) – enlists sponsor development for the Lariat and other Chapter operations
- Legislative – connects with local, state and national resources to promote Chapter and MOAA issues
- Volunteer – develops and coordinates Chapter outreach activities
- Transition – participates in commu-

nity transition activities, provides support to transitioning military, veterans and military spouses

- Scholarship – represents the Chapter each Spring by attending the various JROTC and ROTC award ceremonies

These all provide engagement to whatever level that is appropriate to your calendar. Each gives you an opportunity to use your skills, talents and passion that is exemplified in the MOAA slogan of "Never Stop Serving". How you fit in is up to you. We however are only as successful as the involvement of our members.

Remember, this is your Chapter. Its success depends upon your support. Contact the committee chairs, the Chapter office or me for more information on how you can get involved. We look forward to seeing you soon.

Kitty
Kathryn "Kitty" Meyers
LtCol USAF (Ret)
SPHR, SHRM-SCP
Chapter President

Widow's Tax

(Continued from Page 5)

the NDAA this week.

The achievement would not have been reached without the help of military widows and veterans service organizations, he said.

"They never gave up," Jones said. "MOAA members are just like they were in the military: You never give up until the mission is complete. That's the bottom line and that's what they did. That has been so important. They pushed and we pushed. Without their messages getting to the members of the Senate and the House of Representatives, we couldn't have gotten that done."

Source: MOAA Military Officer Magazine, Amanda Dolasinski, Dec 18, 2019

President Trump signed the bill on Dec 20.

What's Next: According to the legislation, the offset will be phased out over a three-year period in this fashion:

2020: No changes. Current Special Survivor Indemnity Allowance (SSIA) and all current Survivor Benefit Plan-Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (SBP-DIC) offsets remain in place. MOAA will continue to follow the evolution of directives which will support the implementation and ultimate completion of this repeal.

2021: The SBP-DIC offset is reduced by one third. Annuitants will receive the amount that would exceed two-thirds of the Dependency and Indemnity Compensation.

2022: The SBP-DIC offset is reduced by two-thirds. Annuitants will receive the amount that would exceed one-third of the Dependency and Indemnity Compensation.

2023: The SBP-DIC offset is eliminated. Annuitants will receive the full amounts of both SBP and DIC. Further, on Jan. 1, 2023, survivor benefit eligibility is restored to those who previously elected to transfer payment of their annuity to a surviving child or children.

WANTED!

Active Duty or Retired Job Seekers

If you would like to be added to the regular email blast that lists job opportunities in **San Antonio and Texas** please contact David Patrick, the Career Transition Coordinator - Texas

dwpatrick01@gmail.com

If you are an area **employer** who is interested in hiring career transitioning officers or their spouses or if you are a MOAA member interested in helping a career transitioning officer or spouse as a **San Antonio Networker**, or if you are a **MOAA-AC member Job Seeker**, please contact

Kitty Meyers LtCol USAF (Ret)

Chapter Transition Liaison Officer at kamconsulthr@gmail.com



Medical Minute

Bad Breath

Bad Breath (Halitosis) often stems from bacteria feeding on food particles in the mouth. Fend off bad breath by:

- Brushing your teeth—brush at least twice a day. Consider also brushing after meals. If brushing isn't convenient, swish with water or chew sugarless gum.
- Cleaning your tongue—Odor causing bacteria often thrive on the surface of your tongue. Mucous from post-nasal drip can also feed odor causing bacteria. Scraping your tongue or gargling with mouth wash can also help.
- Flossing daily—This removes food particles from between your teeth.
- Drinking enough water or chewing sugarless gum—salvia and water wash away food particles. If you have persistent dry mouth it can be caused by some medications or certain diseases.
- Watching what you eat, drink or inhale—tobacco alcohol, garlic onions, and coffee cause temporary bad breath.
- Bad breath that doesn't seem to respond to these changes may be related to a dental problem such as gum disease, sinuses, stomach or lung disease.
- Brushing your dentures—brush before soaking them at night or putting them back in.

Source: Mayo Clinic Health Letter

Irene Collier (Ret)



Solitaires

Our club attendance is still getting small, compared to the number of names listed as members of the Alamo Chapter. We all realize that as we age, we do not get out as much as we should, primarily due to the stress of driving around this city, and other health concerns. We are still trying to hold our group together for social occasions, even without a leader.

I am sure that there are many Associate Members who have recently joined this category of widows and widowers that are starting to feel some of the isolation of being alone after many years of marriage. Our Military lives have conditioned us to depend on our feeling of family status with others who have had the same experiences over the years of service.

We continue to meet twice a month, the 1st Tuesday and the 3rd Sunday of each Month, if possible. I recently had the Christmas meeting on the 1st Saturday at my residence at Independence Hill, using a Private Dining Room at the complex. We love catching up on friend's lives, we have been meeting together for years.

You are welcome to call me at 210 793 9341 for further information, we are in dire need of a younger energetic leader, and many more interested people, in other words....HELP! This is group that needs to continue.

Pat Shecter

Member

State of Texas Benefits

(Continued from Page 4)

purchase fishing and hunting licenses at a reduced cost.

LEGAL ASSISTANCE

Texas Lawyers for Texas Veterans -

Provided by: State Bar of Texas

This State Bar of Texas program to develop and assist pro bono legal clinics throughout the state for military Veterans who otherwise cannot afford or do not have access to the legal services they need.

Texas Veterans Legal Assistance Project

Provided by: Texas Legal Services Center

The Texas Veterans Legal Assistance Project (VLAP) is a Texas Legal Services Center statewide project to expand the availability of legal assistance to low-income Texas Veterans and their families, with a focus on outreach to the disabled Veterans who live in rural areas of the state. There is no charge for their service, which is provided by telephone to eligible Veterans, at 1-800-622-2520, Option 2.

Military and Veterans Services Center

1422 E. Grayson St., 4th Floor
San Antonio, TX 78207

Phone: 210-335-6775

Fax: 210-335-3632

Hours of Operation

Monday - Friday:

8:00 am - 5:30 pm

By Appointment Only

Source: City of San Antonio, Military & Veterans Affairs



BEXAR ★ COUNTY

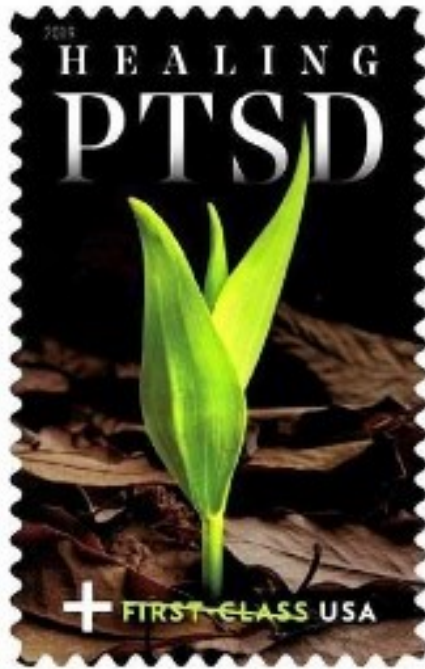
MILITARY & VETERANS EXPO

BENEFITS ★ SERVICES ★ RESOURCES



Thursday, February 27, 2020 · 9am – 2pm · Wonderland of Americas Mall · San Antonio, TX

PTSD Postage Stamp



Proceeds from sales of a new postage stamp issued on 2 DEC will go to support post-traumatic stress disorder research and education at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' National Center for PTSD.

The PTSD center, based at the VA Medical Center in White River Junction, includes seven sites around the country that are

focused on studying and treating PTSD, a mental health condition some people develop following a traumatic event such as combat, a natural disaster, sexual assault or a car accident. Symptoms may include reliving the event, avoidance of reminders of the event, negative thoughts and anxiety that linger long after the trauma.

While Paula Schnurr, the PTSD center's executive director, said she is glad to have the revenue stream to support the center's work, she also hopes the stamp brings awareness to the condition, which will affect tens of millions people in the U.S. — both veterans and civilians — in their lifetimes. Schnurr said she hopes "people who have PTSD or family members see this and they might take some action." She spoke in a phone interview from Charlotte, N.C., where she participated in an event to celebrate the stamp's release. The stamp, which costs 65 cents, features a green plant sprouting from ground covered with fallen leaves that is intended to symbolize the PTSD healing process, according to a news release from the Postal Service. It was designed by Greg Breeding, the postal service's art director, and includes original photography by Mark Laita, a Los Angeles-based commercial photographer.

Treatment for PTSD both through medication and therapy has improved in recent years, Schnurr said, noting that some of the center's research is focused on the effectiveness of different treatments. Public awareness of PTSD has grown following the terrorist attacks on 9/11,

which caused many first responders and others to develop the condition, she said. Subsequent events such as Hurricane Katrina in 2005, the 2011 earthquake and tsunami in Japan, and numerous mass shootings — including one earlier this year at the University of North Carolina-Charlotte, the city where Monday's stamp ceremony took place — have kept the condition in the public eye.

In addition to Schnurr, speakers at the event at McGlohon Theater at Spirit Square also included representatives from the American Red Cross, The American Veteran Foundation, the Wounded Warriors Project and the Charlotte Chapter of National Alliance on Mental Illness.

Among the speakers was Chuck Denny, the founder of The American Veteran Foundation based in North Carolina, who was a major proponent of the PTSD stamp, in honor of his father, Garland Denny, who served in the Navy in the Korean War and, before his death in 2015, advocated for a stamp to raise money for veteran services. "The Postal Service is honored to issue this semipostal stamp as a powerful symbol of the healing process, growth and hope for tens of millions of Americans who experience



Growing up in a Military family, moving from place to place, time goes by and things inevitably change.

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Health, Benefits & Welfare

VA Solid Start: Program Launched to Ensure Vets Are Contacted During Initial Transition. The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), in collaboration with the Departments of Defense and Homeland Security, introduced *VA Solid Start* which will proactively contact all newly separated service members at least three times during their first year of transition from the military.

The program will engage contact with approximately 200,000 Veterans each year and is part of Executive Order 13822 which was issued to improve mental health care and access to suicide prevention resources available to transitioning uniformed service members in the year following discharge, separation or retirement.

“The stress of transition from service can lead to challenges or unmet health care needs for Veterans,” said

VA Secretary Robert Wilkie.

“Through VA Solid Start, the department will ensure consistent, caring contact and help new Veterans get a solid start on their civilian lives.” The goal is to establish a strong relationship between VA and transitioning service members, promoting awareness of VA benefits, services and partner resources available to them. Veterans within their first year of separation from uniformed service experience suicide rates nearly two times higher than the overall Veteran suicide rate. Contacts through VA Solid Start — via phone calls or emails — will ensure transitioning service members are aware of the free VA mental health resources the department offers Veterans for up to a year, regardless of discharge status or service history.

Source: *Military.com* | Dorothy Mills-Gregg | November 14, 2019

VA Urgent Care - Top 10 Frequently Asked Questions:

Have a sore throat, earache, or strained muscle? Then consider contacting your VA facility or using the community urgent care benefit available to eligible Veterans under the MISSION Act. VA facilities across the country offer same-day primary care and mental health services, and many offer additional services as well. With the new community urgent care benefit, eligible Veterans can also visit a local walk-in retail health clinic or urgent care center that is part of VA's contracted network. Urgent care providers treat non-emergent symptoms or conditions such as ear infections, minor burns, and mild skin infections. If you believe your life or health is in danger, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department right away!
(Continued on Page 10)



The Alamo Heights High School Adult Youth Choir singing carols at the Chapter's Christmas Luncheon

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PTSD Postage Stamp

(Continued from Page 8)

PTSD,” David C. Williams, vice chairman of the Board of Governors of the U.S. Postal Service, said in a news release. “Today, with the issuance of this stamp, the nation renews its commitment to raise funds to help treat soldiers, veterans, first responders, health care providers and other individuals dealing with this condition.”

The price of the stamp includes the cost of a first-class stamp at the time of purchase — which is 55 cents currently — and an amount to fund PTSD research. They are available at post offices around the country, through an online shop at www.usps.com/shop or by calling 800-STAMP24. Sheets of 20 can be purchased for \$13.

Congress, through the Semipostal Authorization Act, allows the Postal Service to issue and sell “semipostal” stamps to benefit causes that are “in the national public interest and appropriate.” Revenue from sales of the Healing PTSD stamp — less the cost of postage and reasonable costs incurred by the Postal Service — will go to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The U.S. Postal Service has issued three “semipostal” stamps, starting with a breast cancer research stamp in 1998. Causes for subsequent semipostal stamps have not yet been determined, but suggestions can be sent to the Office of Stamp Services, Attn: Semipostal Discretionary Program, 475 L’Enfant Plaza SW, Room 3300, Washington, DC 20260-3501 or via email to semipostal@usps.gov. More information about the National Center for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder can be found online at <https://www.ptsd.va.gov>.

Source: Valley News, Nora Doyle-Burr, Dec 2, 2019

Health, Benefits & Welfare

(Continued from Page 9)

To be eligible for the urgent care benefit, you must be enrolled in the VA health care system and have received care from VA (either in a VA facility or a community provider) within the past 24 months. To check eligibility, contact your local VA medical facility or call 1-833-4VETNOW (1-833-483-8669). Eligible Veterans can receive urgent care from an urgent care provider in VA’s contracted network without prior authorization from VA. Following are the top 10 Frequently Asked Questions by vets regarding this program:

1. How do I find the nearest in-network community urgent care provider?

Use VA’s Facility Locator at <https://www.va.gov/find-locations/> and click on the VA-approved urgent care locations and pharmacies near you. There are currently two types of urgent care network locations: walk-in retail health clinics and urgent care centers. Seek care at a retail location for an uncomplicated illness such as a sore throat. Visit an urgent location for more pressing illnesses or injuries requiring services such as splinting, casting, or wound treatment.

2. What do I do when I arrive at an urgent care location? What type of identification will I be asked to show?

There is no identification card needed for VA’s urgent care benefit. When you arrive, verify they are part of VA’s contracted network, complete the intake form, and tell the provider you would like to use your VA urgent care benefit. The provider will check your eligibility. Both Veterans and providers can call 1-833-4VETNOW (1-833-483-8669) to confirm eligibility. Veterans can call 1-866-620-2071 for other issues related to the urgent care benefit.

3. Does urgent care cost anything?

No, you do not have to pay anything at the time of the visit. If you owe a co-payment, VA will send you a bill. Co-payments are \$30, but your liability will depend on your assigned priority group and the number of times you

(Continued on Page 15)

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*Please remember their support
and bear these companies in
mind when choosing your service
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Transitioning Tips

Entry Level vs Entry Point

One of the most confounding questions someone transitioning faces is “where will I fit in the hiring organization”. Everyone brings a wealth of skills, talents and experiences to the table from their military career. A common question raised is why I am not being offered a position that is equivalent to the one I left in the military. “I don’t want an entry level position.”

Let’s first look at the competition you face for the desired position. You ask what competition? Consider the folks within the organization who have worked and built a reputation as a current employee. They are looking for a promotion, the recognition for the skills and experiences within the company that have made them and the company successful. That is an asset from the company’s perspective.

There are also external candidates

who have worked or are working for the company’s competitors or within the industry. They are familiar with the ins and outs of not only the required skills, etc. but the culture of the industry and probably the company. The hiring company values this level of experience as well.

So, what is a transitioning military do? Your self-evaluation of your skills, talents and experiences is a first start. Your goal is to make yourself competitive with the competition. What makes you stand out from the crowd as the saying goes. Another major evaluation comes with the analyzing of the culture that works best for you. Past articles have addressed this. Make sure that you know what works for you and how you will fit in the new organization, team, ...

Once you have done your research, it’s time to figure out where you will fit. Here’s the key question. Where is your entry point into the organization?

Some can transition into an executive position as they’ve evaluated all the points mentioned and conclude that the executive level is a fit. Others may be more comfortable taking steps back in the hierarchy to get to know the organization, people, culture, and even the business.

You’ve spent how many years in the military culture. Can you bring someone new into the military at a senior or maybe even a mid-level position? We all started at the bottom of the rung as an E-1 or O-1.

This discussion has revolved around the premise that you are entering into a position that is related to your current skills, etc. Let’s close this with a brief discussion about entry into a career that is unrelated to past experiences. You have a whole new set of skills and experiences to learn. Here’s where an entry level position is appropriate. I

(Continued on Page 15)

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We value your privacy. MOAA does not rent or sell its members' emails to third parties. If you include your email address, you will receive e-communications from MOAA as a member benefit. Visit www.moaa.org/email for details.

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☐ I would you like to help the Chapter as a Volunteer

One-Year Membership \$20

(Monthly newsletter "The Lariat" sent by email)

Luncheon Speaker Bio - Mark Larson



Mark Larson
CEO, City Education Partners

The educational landscape in San Antonio is shifting. **City Education Partners** is creating new opportunities for students and is on the cutting edge of moving the needle for education. With their community partners they develop innovative programs and projects that create groundbreaking public schools for San Antonio.

Mark Larson has spent his career investing in the San Antonio education

ecosystem, from his years as a public school classroom teacher at an innovative magnet campus to founding and leading the Knowledge Is Power Program (KIPP) in San Antonio for 17 years. In his final year with KIPP, Mark helped shepherd a statewide merger of KIPP networks, serving as Chief External Officer for KIPP Texas.

Committed to ensuring that every child has the opportunities they need to graduate from high school, college, and lead a choice-filled life, Mark works through districts, charters, and across the political spectrum to bring about a stronger San Antonio

Mark attended Trinity University for both undergraduate and graduate work. He is married to Stacy Pozza Larson, is the father of Elijah, Samuel, and Ashlan, and is the proud stepfather to Haley.

Come hear Mark speak at our January 23rd Luncheon at Ft Sam Golf Course.

Alamo Chapter

Vision:

To be the primary advocate for the military community.

Mission:

- ◇ Provide information, support and social engagement to members;
- ◇ Offer programs and services for the common good of our military community; and,
- ◇ Support MOAA at the national, state and local levels with a powerful voice.

Visit our website at www.alamomoaa.org for more info



Army Residence
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WELCOME TO THE ARC.

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Whatever your branch of service, if you are a retired officer, the Army Residence Community welcomes you to the freedom and excitement of life in one of America's most unique and military-friendly cities. Here is a total retirement community that surrounds you with patriots like yourself and – if assisted living, memory care, or long-term care is ever needed – with caregivers who understand and honor what you've given your country.

While the ARC independent living community is designed specifically for retired officers and spouses, the ARC Health Care Center welcomes all veterans through private pay for assisted living/memory care/long-term care.

So call **800-890-2305** or go to **armyresidence.com** for more information.
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Great residences | Great food | Great neighbors | Great activities | Great community





Events Calendar

JANUARY

- 1 New Year's Day
- 6 Golf Planning Meeting 2pm
- 7 Solitaire's Luncheon 11am
- 9 Staff Meeting Chapter Office 10am
- 19 Solitaire's Sunday Brunch 11am Randolph Parr Club 11am
- 20 Martin Luther King Jr Day
- 21 Board Meeting 10am
- 21 Deadline for MOAA-AC Scholarship Applications
- 23 Chapter Luncheon 11am Ft Sam Golf Club with speaker Mark Larson of City Education Partners
- 28 VGSAA Mtg 1:30pm

FEBRUARY

- 4 Solitaire's Luncheon 11am
- 6 Staff Meeting 10am Chapter Office
- 10 Blue Skies Satellite Dinner Mtg
- 12 Lincoln's Birthday
- 17 President's Day
- 16 Solitaire's Sunday Brunch 11 am Randolph Parr O Club
- 19 Happy Hour 4-6pm Petroleum Club with speaker MajGen Juan Ayala USMC (Ret)
- 25 VGSAA Mtg 1:30pm
- 27 Bexar County Military & Veterans Expo 9am-2pm Wonderland of Americas Mall

MARCH

- 3 Solitaire's Luncheon 11am Ft Sam Golf Club
- 5 Staff Meeting 10am Chapter Office
- 8 Daylight Savings Time begins
- 12 Board Meeting 10am
- 15 Solitaire's Sunday Brunch 11 am Randolph Parr O Club
- 26 Scholarship Awards Luncheon 11am Ft Sam Golf Club
- 26 The Big Give - South Texas
- 29 National Vietnam War Veterans Day
- 31 VGSAA Mtg 1:30pm

APRIL

- 2 Staff Meeting 10am Chapter Office
- 7 Solitaire's Luncheon
- 10 Good Friday
- 12 Easter Sunday
- 19 Solitaire's Sunday Brunch 11 am Randolph Parr Club
- 23 Chapter Luncheon 11am Ft Sam Golf Club
- 28 VGSAA Mtg 1:30pm

MAY

- 1 Deadline Levels of Excellence Award submission
- 5 Solitaire's Luncheon 11am
- 7 Staff Meeting 10am Chapter Office
- 8 Victory Day in Europe
- 8 Military Spouse Appreciation Day
- 9 VAC Mtg 9am
- 10 Mother's Day
- 16 Armed Forces Day
- 17 Solitaire's Sunday Brunch 11 am Randolph Parr Club
- 25 Memorial Day
- 26 VGSAA Mtg 1:30pm
- 28 Chapter Luncheon 11am Army Residence Community

JUNE

- 2 Solitaire's Luncheon 11am
- 4 Staff Meeting 10am Chapter Office
- 6 D Day
- 12 Women Veterans' Day
- 11 Board Meeting 10am
- 14 Flag Day & US Army Birthday
- 21 Father's Day
- 21 Solitaire's Sunday Brunch 11 am Randolph Parr Club
- 25 Summer Celebration 6:30pm Petroleum Club
- 30 VGSAA Mtg 1:30pm

Health, Benefits & Welfare

(Continued from Page 10)

have used your urgent care benefit in a calendar year. Learn more about urgent care copayments.

4. How does prescription medication work for urgent care?

VA will pay for or fill prescriptions for urgent care. For routine prescription medication longer than a 14-day supply, the prescription must be submitted to VA to be filled. Before filling the prescription, VA will verify the urgent care visit. If there are issues with filling your prescription, call 1-866-620-2071.

5. There are no urgent care clinics in my area. What do I do?

Contact your local VA medical facility to discuss options. Same-day primary and mental health services are available at all VA medical centers. In addition, VA continues to expand its contracted network of urgent care providers so that most Veterans are within a 30-minute drive time from their home to a network urgent care/retail location.

6. If there are no in-network urgent care facilities nearby, can I visit an Emergency Department (ED) instead?

If you are having difficulties receiving urgent care services, contact your local VA medical facility. Same-day primary and mental health services are available at all VA medical centers. If you believe your life or health is in danger, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department immediately. Please note that VA can only pay for a Veteran's emergency care under certain conditions.

7. Can I use the in-network urgent care provider at my local pharmacy as my primary care provider (PCP)?

No. Urgent care is not a replacement for services your PCP offers. Use urgent care for treating minor, non-emergent illnesses and injuries. The urgent care benefit does not cover preventive health care offered by your primary care physician. Always consider talking with or seeing your PCP if you are concerned that the urgent care provider will not understand the complexities of your medical history or medications.

8. How do I know if I need urgent care or emergency care?

Urgent care is for non-life-threatening illnesses or injuries such as strep throat, pink eye, or a strained muscle. Emergency care is for an injury, illness, or symptom so severe that a prudent layperson reasonably believes that delay in seeking immediate medical attention would be hazardous to life or health. Such life-threatening major illnesses or injuries could include severe chest pain, seizures, loss of awareness, heavy uncontrollable breathing, or severe burns. For emergency care, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department right away. Please note that VA can only pay for a Veteran's emergency care under certain conditions.

9. What if I arrive at an in-network urgent care location and have difficulty receiving care?

Call 866-620-2071 or your local VA medical facility.

10. How do I get a free flu shot?

Veterans can receive a flu shot at their local VA medical facility or from any Walgreens location, paid for by VA. Veterans can also receive a flu shot, paid for by VA, at an in-network urgent care location, but it must be administered in conjunction with a condition requiring urgent care.

Source: *Vantage Point* | December 1, 2019 ++]

Transition Tips

(Continued from Page 11)

talked to one gent who argued with me about a computer skills position where he didn't have the required skills. Hello!

We are here to help you through this process so that you succeed through your transition. Many transitioning folks end up job hopping until they find the right fit. That should never be! Best wishes as you transition.

Kitty

Kathryn "Kitty" Meyers
LtCol USAF (Ret)
SPHR, SHRM-SCP
Chapter Transition Liaison Officer



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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 501c 4 within the state of Texas organized to represent the membership and to support the activities of the Texas Council of Chapters and MOAA National.

MOAA and its affiliated chapters and councils are non partisan.

Advertising contained in the newsletter is not endorsed by MOAA or its affiliate the Alamo 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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MOAA Alamo Chapter





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THE LARIAT

National Award Winning Newsletter



Thursday January 23, 2020

Chapter Luncheon

Speaker: Mark Larson

Executive Director City Education Partners

Ft Sam Golf Club
1050 Harry Wurzbach, San Antonio TX 78209

Meet & Greet begins 11am - Lunch served 11:30am

Menu

A) Ham Steak with Pineapple Ring B) Chicken Mornay
House Salad, Baked Potato, Candied Yams, Long Green Beans & Carrots, Dinner Rolls
Sherbert Ice cream, Iced tea, coffee, water

Cost per person: \$22 pre-registration or \$24 at the door
Enclosed: \$ _____

RSVP by 4pm Monday 20 Jan
Reservations not cancelled by noon Tuesday 21st will be forfeited/billed
Non member Officers & guests are welcome with paid reservations

Name _____

Guest(s): _____

Call (210) 228-9955 to make/pay your reservation or send check made payable to MOAA-AC to P.O. Box 340497, Ft Sam Houston, TX 78234 Or contact us by email moaa-ac@sbcglobal.net to hold a reservation or reserve and pay on-line at **www.alamomoaa.org**



Wednesday February 19, 2020

Happy Hour 4-6pm

Come meet MajGen Juan Ayala
USMC (Ret)

Director of Military & Veteran Affairs, City Of SA

Petroleum Club

8620 N. New Braunfels #700, San Antonio TX 78217

One complimentary drink ticket (beer, wine, soda, coffee or iced tea) and plentiful Happy Hour snack food buffet. Pay-as-you-go bar available.

Cost per person: \$13 pre-registration or \$15 at the door
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Reservations not cancelled by noon Tuesday 18th will be forfeited/billed
Friends & Family (over 21) are welcome!

Name _____

Guest(s): _____

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