



Jayhawk Chapter MOAA Newsletter



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September Program:

Our guest speaker will be former KSU football coach, Bill Snyder.

☆☆☆☆☆ CHAPTER
2003/2004/2006

☆☆☆☆ CHAPTER
2005/2007/2008

The President's Corner . . .

Dear Jayhawk MOAA Friends and Colleagues

I trust that each of you enjoyed our beautiful Kansas Summer...it was like Colorado without the mountains. Just so comfortable...cool mornings and evenings coupled with sunny days and enough rain to keep the lawns green.

I wanted to update you on a couple of things. First, once again, our Chapter was recognized for its overall excellence with a Four Star Rating by MOAA National. This honor is a tribute to each of you and your commitment to the Jayhawk Chapter. It resulted from the superb leadership of Admiral Mike Sullivan, the dedication of our Board of Directors and your participation in our dinner meetings. Without a doubt, an important aspect of our chapter's excellence is the tremendous job Erv Hodges has done with the General Comfort Scholarships – and – your annual financial support of this wonderful program. On behalf of our Board – thank you – let's continue the outstanding reputation of the Jayhawk Chapter as we enjoy the camaraderie that is unique to those who have served our great nation.

Second, the University of Kansas has instituted a Wounded Warrior Program. Seven veterans of combat in Iraq and Afghanistan who were wounded in battle are now pursuing degrees at KU. I have the honor of serving on the faculty's Wounded Warrior Mentors Task Force. These young men and their wives will be our guests at either our September or November Dinner Meeting. I know you will enjoy meeting them. Splendid American patriots.

Third, our KU Air Force ROTC Program has a new leader – LtCol Gena Stuchbery. LtCol Stuchbery comes to KU from an assignment at Columbus AFB in Columbus, Mississippi. We will formally welcome and introduce Gena at our September Dinner Meeting – which is Air Force Night. The Air Force ROTC will provide the color guard and several cadets and cadre will join us.

Finally, I know you will enjoy the remarks of our September guest speaker – Coach Bill Snyder. Following his tremendous run of success at K-State, he is now representing Governor Sebelius as a Leadership Ambassador – making presentations to adult and youth groups in the Sunflower State.

Thank you again for your continued help and support. We look forward to being with you on Wednesday, 24 September for another memorable evening of fun and comradeship.

Very Respectfully

Bernie



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1 September 2008

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*** Reservations should be sent
to Jim Cooper by
17 September**

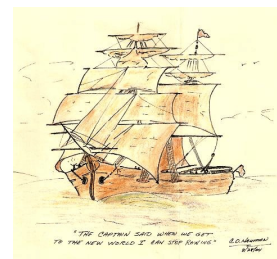


JAYHAWK CHAPTER NEWS

TAPS



*“THE CAPTAIN SAID WHEN WE GET
TO THE NEW WORLD I CAN STOP ROWING”
caption from sketch (right) by C. O. Nauman, 08/28/04*



Memorial services for CAPT C. O. Nauman, 81, were held 26 July at First Presbyterian Church in Lawrence. Private inurnment was scheduled for a later date in Highland Cemetery in Ottawa. C. O. died 20 July 2008, at his home.

He was born 6 January 1927, in Emporia, the son of Clarence G. and May Laura Davidson Nauman. He received a bachelor's degree in business administration from Kansas University in 1950 and graduated from the University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Dentistry as a doctor of dental surgery in 1955. Dr. Nauman was a Lawrence resident since 1957.

CAPT Nauman served in the U.S. Navy during World War II. He later retired as a captain in the U.S. Naval Reserves. He retired from his dental practice in 1983. He was a past president of the Jayhawk Chapter, MOAA, and served as a recruiter/information officer for the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, MD, for several years.

He married LaVonne Newman on 2 June 1950, in Sterling. She survives, of the home. Other survivors include a daughter, a son, five grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

James Stokes reports: “Mutt Henry is still at Brandon Woods. I feel he is very lonely and would enjoy brief visits.”

Travels with Bernie and Judy:

Judy and I had a splendid two week vacation in August. The original purpose of the trip was to visit our daughter Kathryn and her husband Jon in Los Angeles. Judy has been accumulating a bunch of stuff to take to them – things too large or too fragile for mailing. So – we rented an SUV – filled it to the brim – and headed west.

Stops along the way included short visits with my brother Andy and his wife Diane in Tucson and an overnight with Judy's niece-Megan-who teaches school in Las Vegas. Played golf with my brother at his course – The Gallery at Dove Mountain – and enjoyed relaxing at the beautiful Kish home in the desert.

Spent five days with Kate and Jon in their new apartment. The kids just can't afford to purchase a home in LA. Judy helped Kate decorate, rearrange furniture, paint and do those things a Mom does for a married daughter. We had several nice dinners including great Italian food at Dan Tana's, a Frank Sinatra favorite in Hollywood.

Following our visit with Kate and Jon, we spent two days with our Army pals Frank and Barbara Gibson in Tustin. Frank was the co-captain of the 1960 Army football team, so he and I talk football non-stop. And, Judy and Barbara spend their time knitting, flea-marketing and trading recipes.

One tip that I have for all of you – use the Military Guest Facilities when you are traveling. We stayed at Tinker AFB in Oklahoma City and Kirtland AFB in Albuquerque. The cost was \$43 per night for a first-class room. Tinker is particularly nice. In fact, I recommend a weekend trip to OKC using Tinker as your base of operations.

When we pulled back into our driveway in Lawrence on Thursday, 14 August – we had put almost 4,000 miles on the Toyota Highlander. A wonderful two weeks with family and friends and spectacular vistas in New Mexico and Arizona.

From Jim & Sandy Cooper: The Coopers were on the move a bit this summer, verifying the state of I-35 in both directions. In late July, the annual Mary Kay seminar (read convention) is held in Dallas, and Sandy and I headed south into the Pink Bubble. I went with Sandy last year for the first time, grudgingly, certain I was going to just hate it. Surprisingly, I had a great time – the seminar has a lot of similarity to a three-day pep rally, and the atmosphere is infused with a real sense of excitement and esprit de corps. The Band of Sisters is similar to the military in its shared sense of mission and camaraderie – except pink is the color of the day. The husbands are treated very well, as we are still a minority in attendance. The activity schedule takes up most of one's waking hours, and the mood is infectious. I come away determined to sell more product!

(continued to page 10)

Correction: The correct e-mail address for 2Lt John King is kingoalie@sbcglobal.net. My boo-boo!!

**The newsletter is only as good as the material available,
so each member is requested to forward news and other items of interest to the editors.**



Army News

LTC John Basso

MOAA Friends,

It has been a busy and productive summer for your KU Army ROTC Program. Before I provide you an update on that front, let me first highlight KU's Wounded Warriors. Less than a week ago, KU welcomed its first cohort of seven Soldiers into the Wounded Warrior Education Initiative Program. This one-of-a-kind pilot program, made possible by the exceptional work of Chancellor Hemenway, the Office of the Secretary of the Army, Fort Leavenworth, and others, has brought wounded Soldiers, some now retired, to campus to pursue graduate studies toward eventually assuming teaching positions at Army schools such as CGSC. I'm sure you all join me in applauding this exceptional initiative. This program exemplifies the growing relationship between KU and DoD as the University seeks to strengthen its already noteworthy service to our nation.

Also growing is KU Army ROTC. We will start this school year with over 100 cadets for the first time in many years (last year we began with 78). Our growth can be attributed to the terrific efforts of our recruiting team, led by MAJ Ted Culbertson of the Kansas Army National Guard. Clearly aiding our cause has been the exceptional support from Cadet Command, who fought for the funds that put most of those 100+ cadets on full-tuition scholarship. Even

with growing numbers, we have kept the quality of KU Army Officers high. The results from LDAC 2008 at Fort Lewis in leadership, military skills, and physical fitness assessments all improved over last year and considerably exceeded Cadet Command averages: percentage of "Excellent" ratings in leadership doubled to 40%; Recondo Badges awarded for exceptional performance across marksmanship, navigation, and other Soldier skills increased 400%; Land Navigation initial score average climbed from 78 to 89; and, our Army Physical Fitness Test average increased from 261 to 272.

If you want to look these latest Jayhawks in the eye, or just want to cheer on our Orange Bowl Champs and catch up with old friends, consider attending our Jayhawk Battalion Alumni Association get-together at the Military Science Building on Homecoming Saturday, 25 October at 0900.

I hope to see you around Lawrence or around campus and on behalf of our battalion, thanks MOAA as a whole for the terrific support you give us.

Rock Chalk!

LTC John Basso



Navy News

CAPT Thomas Arnold, USN



Greetings from the Jayhawk Navy!

The new academic year has gotten off to a busy start for the KU Naval ROTC Unit. We have added 29 new students to the battalion – 23 freshmen midshipmen (16 Navy option and 7 Marine option), three transfer students from other NROTC Units, two new Navy Seaman-to-Admiral program Officer Candidates and one new Marine Corps Enlisted Commissioning Program student. This brings the battalion enrollment up to 78, an 8% increase in the size of the unit over the 72 students who began the academic year last August. We are very impressed with the quality and enthusiasm of our new students and look forward to the contributions they will make to the unit over the next four years. Please join us in welcoming them to the Jayhawk Battalion!

This was a busy summer for the students. Twenty-five of them attended summer training: 17 went on Navy summer cruises, four attended USMC Mountain Warfare training in California, and four successfully completed the very demanding USMC Officer Candidate School in Quantico, VA. Many other students took summer courses here at KU. Our new freshmen went through a physically and mentally challenging five day Orientation and Indoctrination (O&I) course at Camp Clark, Missouri, in early August and performed superbly under the instruction of a capable group of upper classmen instructors. Three members of the active duty staff participated in midshipmen summer training events as well: LT Groenland spent six weeks in Naples, Italy, coordinating summer cruises in the Mediterranean; CAPT

Nicolas spent a month at Camp Lejeune, NC; and Debbie Loy spent a month in Norfolk, VA.

We are looking forward to a great Fall semester, with the Battalion under the capable leadership of two of our enlisted commissioning program students – SSGT Ridings, the Battalion Commanding Officer, and OC Cribbs, the Battalion Executive Officer. It promises to be a busy year, but we are all eager to tackle the challenges and opportunities that lay ahead. We look forward to the continued support of the MOAA Jayhawk Chapter as the year progresses.



Air Force News

LtCol Gena Stuchbery, USAF

MOAA Friends:

It's great to be on board at Det 280! Our entire cadre has arrived and we're ready to roll into the fall semester. The detachment staff has been undermanned for six months so it's great to have a full complement as we kick off the new academic year, which we did with a bang at our freshman orientation session last week.

The cadet wing was pleased to welcome in 30 new AS100 classmates – a very robust group, thanks to the dedicated recruiting efforts of Capt Edmonds. This is the biggest incoming class we've seen in awhile. The freshmen enjoyed two days' worth of briefings, lots of paperwork, some laser tag, and a barbeque! We're looking forward to a great year with this group.

Other good news from the summer, our 13 attendees at field training excelled. We garnered one Superior Performer, two Warrior Spirit awards, one member of an Honor Flight, three Expert Marksmen, and three CTA (Cadet Training Assistant) recommendations. The CTA nods are awesome because it means those cadets were such stand-outs they're being nominated to help train next summer's class at Field

On a final note, I am pleased to pass along that LT Laura Jeffries, who departed our staff in June after a four year tour here (which included a year of temporary duty in Iraq) has been selected for promotion to LCDR. Laura is now serving as an Information Warfare Officer in Washington, DC. Please join me in congratulating her for achieving this significant milestone in her Navy career!

CAPT Tom Arnold

Training. We're proud of all of our Field Training graduates – way to go!

The Det is also excited about our summer PDT (Professional Development Training) program. We sent six cadets on a variety of enrichment excursions and are anxious to read their reports and hear of their experiences in such exotic locales as Morocco and Egypt (Cadet Wing Commander Brittany Ramos), Vandenberg AFB (Cadet Parker shadowed the OSI), and USAFA (Cadet Bergstrom got to SOAR and Cadet Barnes attended Free Fall).

So all in all, it's been a great summer for the Air Force ROTC detachment. As the new staff gets situated, we look forward to meeting all of you and working with you this year. Thanks for all the support you provide to our program – we couldn't do it without you.

Regards,

Lt Col Gena Stuchbery



KANSAS COUNCIL OF CHAPTERS

COL Gary LaGrange, President-Elect of the Kansas Council, reports they had a very successful meeting on 9 August in Overland Park and that the next meeting will be in Wichita on 8 November.

He also has asked that we include a link to **Help us Learn...Give us Hope**, the project supporting school children in Iraq and Afghanistan. More than 28,000 pounds of school supplies and \$12,000 to cover shipping costs have been donated so far. The website should be up this week. It is www.helpuslearngiveushope.org.

MOAA LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

*This is a summary of the many items MOAA produces each week on legislative activities.
Those who have e-mail receive the full Legislative Updates each week.*

MOAA Legislative Update, 11 July 2008:

New Retirement Review Board Announced

DoD has established a new Physical Disability Board of Review to reassess whether members medically separated since 9/11 with disability ratings of 20 percent or less should have been medically retired with higher ratings.

CRSC Processing Begins

The military services recently began processing combat related special compensation claims for disability retirees with less than 20 years of service. Do you qualify?

MOAA Legislative Update, 18 July 2008:

"Unveto" Impact On You and Your Doctor

On July 15 -- the last day before Medicare started implementing a 10.6% cut in payments to doctors for visits since July 1 -- President Bush vetoed the legislation designed to reverse the cut.

But that same afternoon, both the House and Senate flexed their "unveto" authority -- voting in overwhelming majorities to override the President's action. In doing that, Congress made sure several positive things happened:

Medicare resumed paying claims at the current rate, retroactive to July 1, without imposing the 10.6% cut for visits during the interim period

TRICARE payments will continue at the current rate without interruption

Medicare and TRICARE rates will be increased 1.1% as of January 1, 2009

Medicare coverage for physical, speech and occupational therapy is restored for medically necessary care

Time to Act on TRICARE, Concurrent Receipt, SBP, and More

Senate leaders are planning to act on the FY2009 Defense Authorization Bill during the last week of July - just a little more than a week from now.

Now is the time for MOAA members and others to show the same level of interest they did in getting the Medicare bill passed.

You can do that by using MOAA's Web site to urge your senators to support selected amendments that are crucial to our members' interests, including:

Sen. Frank Lautenberg's (D-NJ) and Sen. Chuck Hagel's (R-NE) amendment to protect military beneficiaries from disproportional TRICARE fee hikes

Sen. Harry Reid's (D-NV) amendment to expand eligibility for concurrent receipt payments

Sen. Bill Nelson's (D-FL) amendment to end the DIC offset for SBP widows

Sen. Saxby Chambliss' (R-GA) amendment to provide fairer retirement credit for Guard and Reserve members who served in Iraq and Afghanistan

Even if you previously sent this message, it's time to send it again.

Congress has a short attention span, and volume counts.

Retro Payment Program Probed

Earlier this week, the House Oversight and Government Reform Subcommittee on Domestic Policy grilled Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) officials and their contractors about problems highlighted in a committee report titled, "Die or Give Up Trying: How Poor Contractor Performance, Government Mismanagement, and the Erosion of Quality Controls Denied Thousands of Disabled Veterans Timely and Accurate Retroactive Retired Pay Awards."

Red Tape Cut for Military Kids - in 10 States

Thanks to Delaware's approval last week of the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children, a commission can now be formed to help military children more easily navigate various state education systems when they move among the 10 states that have signed the compact so far.

Those states include Arizona, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Missouri, and Oklahoma so far. North Carolina's governor is expected to sign soon.

Achieving the 10-state threshold to implement the compact is a great step forward, but even in those states, there's work yet to be done. Participating states must select commissioners to work together in implementing reciprocal procedures to cut red tape for military children. As additional states approve the compact, their representatives will join the commission.

We need every state sign the compact to help all relocating military kids with improved records transfers, reduction in repetitive courses, and more opportunity for advancement, college admission acceptance and scholarships.

MOAA Legislative Update, 25 July 2008:

CRSC "Glitch" Surfaces

Last month we reported that the services began processing Combat-Related Special Compensation (CRSC) claims based on expanded CRSC eligibility to members with less than 20 years of service who were retired for medical reasons or retired under the Temporary Early Retirement Authority (TERA) during the 1990s force reduction.

Thousands of retirees will benefit from the CRSC expansion. But there are some with combat-related disabilities who currently lose their entire retired pay to the disability offset and will still see no CRSC payment because of an unanticipated glitch in the statutory payment formula.

Because many factors go into the calculation, there's no clear cutoff to explain exactly who will get less than expected. In general, those most likely to be affected are enlisted members with fewer than 14 years of service who have a high VA disability percentage but a significantly lower percentage that's due to combat (see example). But some retired officers are affected, too.

We should be clear that the Defense Department and finance center aren't the culprits here...they have to pay according to the statutory formula. Informally, service and

finance officials agree with us that the formula doesn't work as it should in some cases.

In most cases, it works fine (for other examples, click here).

MOAA has briefed the Armed Services Committee staffs on the problem and a potential legislative fix. We're hoping the fix can be worked into this year's Defense Authorization Bill.

More Wounded Warrior Woes

The House Armed Services Military Personnel Subcommittee held a hearing on July 22 as a follow-up to its investigation of how the Army is addressing the problems identified in the Walter Reed scandal last year. Unfortunately, the Subcommittee found some continuing shortfalls in the Army's ability to manage the recent growth of the wounded warrior population.

Specifically, the number of caseworkers wasn't rising to keep pace with the increased number of wounded, so that their workloads were double what was intended, and assistance was degraded accordingly.

Legislators found this understaffing and under-resourcing particularly worrisome, since the number of soldiers in the Army's warrior transition units (WTU) is expected to keep rising, from the current 12,000 to 20,000 next year.

Army medical officials described difficulties in filling medical and case worker positions with qualified professionals who are knowledgeable about medical and physical evaluation boards and processes.

LTG Michael Rochelle, Army deputy chief of staff for personnel, acknowledged, "We weren't agile, didn't anticipate the bureaucracy, and didn't empower our commanders sufficiently to meet requirements." He said new changes in policy are expected to correct the problems by January 2009.

VA Disconnect on Guard and Reserve

A VA Inspector General report released last week said the VA failed to send outreach letters to more than 36,000 National Guard and Reserve veterans. The report said this was one example of problems encountered by Iraq and Afghanistan veterans in accessing the VA claims and transition assistance programs, and highlighted shortfalls in VA staff training to understand eligibility requirements for Guard and Reserve veterans.

At a Senate Veterans Affairs Committee hearing on July 23, VA officials addressed what is being done to remedy these issues. But testimony from reserve component commanders and military and civilian mental health providers got most of the Committee's attention.

They acknowledged that several VA programs are in place, but said servicemembers and their families are still falling through the cracks. They recommended that:

VA and DoD don't need to be the only source of care - care can be supplemented by building a large civilian network that's willing to help

The VA needs larger numbers of experienced mental health providers to provide group and individualized care for veterans and their families

VA and DoD need to educate the public that many servicemembers are experiencing normal reactions to combat or operational stress, not all of which is related to PTSD or TBI, and that they need services outside the medical community to help them through depression, anger management, relationships, finances, and grief

VA must use age- and population-appropriate media and services to reach out to veterans on their terms

Sen. John Rockefeller (D-WV) said, "It's ironic that we pick these men and women for their youth to serve our country and we ask them to take risks, but when they come back from war we drop them at their most vulnerable age."

MOAA intends to work with DoD, VA, and Congress to ensure all of our veterans and their families, including those in the Guard and Reserve, receive the benefits and care they have earned by their sacrifices.

MOAA's LEGISLATIVE UPDATE for August 1, 2008:

Senate Punts Key Defense Bill.

Senate political squabbles are jeopardizing key legislation on pay, benefits, and support for troops, retirees, families and survivors.

Troop/Vet Benefits Bills Clear House

With the August recess at hand, the House has rushed to pass a number of measures strongly endorsed by MOAA that address disability, financial, tax, reemployment, and health care protections for veterans and military families.

VA Disability System Reform: H.R. 5892 would implement a number of recommendations of the Veterans Disability Benefits Commission. The bill would require the VA to provide immediate payment for unquestioned disabilities such as amputations rather than holding up claims until all conditions are evaluated. It would also require a plan to modernize the VA disability rating schedule and address quality of life issues, change evaluator incentives to improve processing quality, and require the VA to establish special offices to assist survivors and dependents. In addition, it would allow a survivor or dependent to proceed with a VA claim if the veteran dies before it is adjudicated

Mortgage Foreclosure Protections: H.R. 3221 would prohibit foreclosure on property owned by a servicemember for nine months (vs. 90 days) following deployment. It would also increase, through the end of 2008, the maximum guaranty amount for mortgages backed by the VA

VA Health Care and Counseling: H.R. 6445 would exempt vets who have catastrophic, non-service-connected disabilities from paying copayments for hospital or nursing home care and loosen restrictions on counseling for those vets' family members

Reemployment Rights: H.R. 6225 would strengthen protections for reservists denied reemployment benefits by state or private employers

Armed Forces Student Rights: H.R. 6225 would limit interest on loan debts to 6% for members on active duty. It would also require colleges to refund tuition and fees for students forced to leave school because of military orders and reinstate those students on return with the same academic status held prior to service

Cellphone Contracts: H.R. 6225 would let servicemembers terminate or suspend personal services contracts (e.g., cellphone or cable TV) entered into before being notified of PCS or deployment orders and penalize providers who violate the law

Spouse Domicile: H.R. 6225 would let spouses of active duty members maintain the same state of domicile as

the servicemember for state taxation purposes and voter registration

Roth Thrift Saving Plan (TSP): A provision in H.R. 1108 would allow servicemembers and federal workers a "Roth TSP" option, entailing taxable deposits into the federal retirement savings plan and tax-free withdrawals in retirement

In-state Tuition: H.R. 4137 would require all states to continue in-state college tuition rates for a military dependent previously granted such rates if the military parent is re-assigned outside the state

MOAA's Legislative Update for August 8, 2008:

Here We Go Again

A Pentagon panel on military compensation has issued a new report proposing changes to the military retirement and health care systems that would make military people wait until age 57 for full retired pay and raise TRICARE fees for retirees under 65.

MOAA's Legislative Update for August 15, 2008:

Purposes and Pitfalls of Retirement Reform

The recent report of the 10th Quadrennial Review of Military Compensation (QRMC) recommends another version of military retirement reform. It has much in common with previous proposals to overhaul the military retirement system.

Grassroots Report Card

It's no secret that volume of correspondence to legislators matters. So far this year, MOAA members have sent more messages than all of last year combined. Check out the specifics below.

Post-9/11 GI Bill Questions and Answers

http://www.moaa.org/lac/lac_resources/lac_resources_adgr/lac_resources_adgr_gibill.htm

Purposes and Pitfalls of Retirement Reform

The recent report of the 10th Quadrennial Review of Military Compensation (QRMC) recommends yet another version of military retirement reform. It has much in common with previous proposals to overhaul the military retirement system, including:

- * greater emphasis on a 401(k)-style program
- * delayed receipt of full military retired pay until age 57-60
- * greater use of cash incentive bonuses at the discretion of the service
- * retirement vesting for servicemembers with 10 or more years of service

Current career servicemembers and retirees almost universally look on such proposals with dismay - especially the proposed delay in payment of retired pay until later in life.

Most such efforts have been rejected out of hand by past Congresses. And the single, much more modest effort enacted in 1986 (the so-called "REDUX" plan) had to be repealed in 1999 after the Joint Chiefs of Staff complained that it was undermining retention.

So why do these proposals keep coming up? There are several reasons, including:

Equity: One argument is only a relatively small percentage of people who serve in the military actually stay until

retirement, and those who leave before that point earn no retirement, whereas civilian careers are increasingly mobile and career-changers can take vested benefits with them.

Efficiency: Military people don't appreciate the value of long-term, inflation-adjusted benefits, and substituting less costly up-front cash bonuses can generate desired retention behavior at less cost to the government.

Flexibility: This line of logic is that the current 20-year system pulls some people to 20 years that military force managers would prefer to be able to separate selectively - by performance, specialty, or other criteria - and encourages others to leave after attaining 20 years, when service managers would rather have more authority to selectively decide who to retain for longer careers and who to separate or retire.

Let's start with the last two issues. The efficiency and flexibility arguments clearly indicate that these proposals are designed to suit the management convenience of military force planners rather than to address the question of what we owe military people for agreeing to serve for 20 to 30 years under conditions of service that would be unacceptable to most American citizens.

That one-sided perspective gives inadequate consideration to several issues MOAA thinks are crucial in assessing the pros and cons of such fundamental changes.

Predictability: Servicemembers making career decisions after four to 12 years of service have a good understanding of the demands and sacrifices inherent in a military career. In return, they expect a reciprocal commitment that, once they've completed career requirements, they will have earned their own decision flexibility and a compensation package that will help them transition to a second career and the rest of their life. The current system is very predictable, if demanding. If you accept the demands and risks and complete a career, you will be rewarded with a unique lifetime compensation package that's not available to most civilians for the same period of service. A plan that removes guaranteed compensation during the second-career years and replaces it with a complicated system of non-guaranteed bonuses that could change from year to year at the discretion of future force planners would make it extremely difficult for servicemembers to assess the value and stability of their future retirement package relative to the sacrifices demanded of them.

Proportionality: Career servicemembers have a retirement system that's not available to civilians because their service conditions are exponentially more arduous than civilian working conditions. The 20-year "cliff vesting" system principle is that the reward is inappropriate unless the full requisite service is completed. The QRMC estimates the cost of its proposed system would be the same or slightly less than that of the current system. But it would pay considerable sums to people who voluntarily separate short of fulfilling a career. That means the money only could come from the pockets of those who serve a career - by deferring the age at which they can draw full retired pay.

Taking money from people who complete a military career to pay those who leave service doesn't amount to equity in MOAA's book, nor is it a sound retention

formula. Imagine what retention would be, in today's environment, if the Army told a soldier with 10 years of service (and an upcoming third or fourth Iraq tour and an upset family) that his choice was to leave with a share of his retirement or continue serving under these conditions and not draw retired pay until age 57.

Uncertainty: The only thing we can be pretty sure of is that the needs of the force 10 years downstream will be different than the force planners are planning for today. Consider the past 30 years. We had big retention problems in the 1970s, followed by the Reagan buildup of the '80s, then the Berlin Wall came down and the country declared a peace dividend and couldn't cut people fast enough in the mid-1990s. Now, after seven years of war, we're pulling out every possible stop to meet recruiting goals and paying record retention bonuses to keep people from getting out under these terrible war conditions. Thank heaven for the 20-year retirement system. It's the only reason we still have a viable force. Given a dangerous world, fickle Congresses and administrations, and an inability to foretell the future, giving force planners maximum flexibility to work their force-shaping ways is a good way to make sure we'll be less ready the next time we need to "plus up" the force.

Responsibility: The fact that military people tend to underestimate the value of retired pay and its annual COLAs is not a reason to take advantage of their misunderstanding. After we've extracted two or three decades of service and sacrifice from them, we have a responsibility to do what's right. We know the value of their retirement, even if they don't fully understand. The services shouldn't have the kind of payday-lender mentality that tacitly encourages the troops to trade away a big chunk of their future retirement value in order to take a much lower-value cash bonus now. That's the "human capital" model that deems it "efficient" to extract the maximum service from them at the least possible cost. That's not efficiency, it's usury. The military services have a higher responsibility to protect the long-term interests of families from whom the country has exacted such a terrible price over the past seven years.

Objectivity: Economists and modelers don't like things they can't quantify, and such things usually are excluded from their models as nonobjective. So the models give positive "benefit" credit for the cost of VA disability compensation and health care, but fail to account for the terrible suffering that must be incurred to warrant those benefits. The models give positive credit for added bonuses but no negative credit for the increasing angst of wartime conditions and families upset over repeated separations. Then we wonder why the models don't work in wartime and initiatives like the 1986 REDUX plan (which reduced retired pay value by 20 percent for post-1986 entrants) ultimately hurt retention and have to be repealed. Turns out the system that cut 20-year retirement benefits to encourage longer service ended up reducing the propensity to get to 20 instead. The lesson is that refusing to account for the subjective isn't quite the same as being objective.

Grassroots Report Card

MOAA members are some of the most reliable and active members of any association. We've always said that it's because MOAA has such members that we're able to have success on Capitol Hill.

So far this year, almost 277,000 messages have been sent to Congress on a variety of issues through MOAA's Web site, surpassing last year's total of 240,000 messages. The issue that generated the most messages was an alert asking Congress to avert the 10.6% cut in Medicare and TRICARE payments to providers. That alert accounts for 30% (about 83,000) of all messages sent to Congress so far this year.

<http://echo4.bluehornet.com/ct/3318266:3744195545:m:3:230981068:8E44E61343122FA509633734589A91D4>

MOAA's LEGISLATIVE UPDATE for August 22, 2008:

Pentagon vs. Widows - Round 2

On June 12, the U.S. Court of Federal Claims ruled in favor of three SBP widows who sued the government (*Sharp v. The United States*) to avoid any deduction of VA Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) from their restored SBP annuities.

On August 11, Pentagon lawyers appealed that ruling to the United States Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit.

At issue is a 2004 law (PL 108-183) that restored DIC payments to veterans' surviving spouses who remarry after their 57th birthday. Before the law change, survivors lost DIC regardless of the age at which they remarried. The three widows claim the new law not only restored their lost VA benefit, but also prohibited deduction of DIC from SBP in such cases. When DoD initially rejected that interpretation of the new law, the widows sued.

The new Pentagon appeal is one more step in a potentially long legal process that could ultimately end up in the U.S. Supreme Court.

But this court case may yet prove to be one more tool in MOAA's campaign to end the unfair SBP/DIC offset for all survivors of active or retired members who die of service-caused conditions.

Wounded Warrior Problems and Progress

Last week, at its 2008 Combat Operational Stress Control Conference, the U.S. Marine Corps rolled out its leadership plan to help commanders, troops, caregivers, and family members fight psychological stress and remove the stigma often attached to brain- and mental-health-related conditions. The idea is to institutionalize a culture of support and acceptance in seeking care for what, in fact, are war wounds.

MOAA strongly applauds such efforts by the services, DoD and others, but is concerned about the difficulty of coordinating multiple ongoing efforts and task forces intended to ease the medical and administrative troubles faced by members and families suffering from war-related injuries and conditions.

Thus, MOAA and the U.S. Naval Institute are co-sponsoring a Sept. 17 special symposium in Washington DC titled, "Measuring Success: Keeping Faith with Wounded Warriors and Their Families." The symposium will provide a report card on how the government is doing in meeting its responsibilities to wounded troops and families, highlighting successes and problems encountered so far, and what more is needed to ensure long-term success.



JAYHAWK CHAPTER MOAA



A membership meeting will be held **Wednesday, 24 September 2008**, at the Lawrence Country Club. Dinner cost is \$20.00/meal.

The Program: Our guest speaker will be former KSU football coach, Bill Snyder.

Social Hour: 1800 hours

Dinner: 1900 hours

The Menu: *Chicken, baked potato, vegetable, rolls, salad, tea or coffee and ice cream*

Send your reservation and check payable to **Jayhawk Chapter MOAA**
to arrive no later than **17 September 2008**, to:
CAPT (Ret) Jim Cooper - 1115 Stone Meadows Drive, Lawrence, KS 66049-3961

**Dinner reservations are confirmed on Monday before the dinner.
Cancellations, if necessary, should be made prior to Monday noon;
otherwise, the Lawrence Country Club will charge us for those meals.**

If you have any questions, you may contact Jim at 842-7037 or John Halladay at 843-6184.

cut here

Yes, please make _____ reservations for me and my guests. (Spouse and other guests are welcome.)

The cost is \$20.00 per meal. I am enclosing a check for \$_____ for meal(s).

Clayton L. Comfort Award program contribution \$_____
(Separate check made out to "KU Endowment")

TOTAL: \$_____

Name

Telephone

**IF YOU NEED A RIDE TO MEETINGS, PLEASE LET US KNOW HERE _____
AND GIVE US YOUR TELEPHONE NUMBER _____**

**TEAR OFF AND RETURN THIS FORM WITH A CHECK PAYABLE TO:
JAYHAWK CHAPTER MOAA
CAPT (Ret) Jim Cooper, 1115 Stone Meadows Drive, Lawrence, KS 66049-3961**

MOAA WEBSITE: www.moaa.org

KANSAS COUNCIL WEBSITE: www.kansasmooa.org

JAYHAWK CHAPTER WEBSITE: www.jayhawkmoaa.org

We are still looking for members who can/will receive the Newsletter via e-mail.

*Please let us know at
jwhalladay@sunflower.com*

2008 - 09 Jayhawk MOAA Calendar:

| <u>2008</u> | | <u>2009</u> | |
|-------------------------------|---|--------------------|--------------|
| Wednesday 24 September | MOAA meeting (Note change of meeting date) | Tuesday 20 January | MOAA meeting |
| Tuesday 18 November | MOAA meeting | Tuesday 17 March | MOAA meeting |
| | | Tuesday 19 May | MOAA meeting |

(Coopers - continued from page 2)

In August, we made our annual trek north to Pequot Lakes, Minnesota. The gent that I worked for when we were senior in the Navy's patrol aviation community is retired and teaches school in Japan now, but he and his family return to their lake house every summer. We go up for a visit and enjoy the respite from Kansas' normally blazing August weather. The mosquitoes are not usually bad up there, but this summer they were especially scarce, as Minnesota has had a drought. Of note, the regional Minnesota National Guard Camp Ripley is not far from Pequot lakes, and it is an extremely busy place these days – you often hear distant echoes of artillery from that direction now.



*Newsletter Editor
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One Powerful Voice.®

For every officer at every stage of life and career.

***Look forward to
seeing you at our
meeting on
Wednesday, 24 September***