



Jayhawk Chapter MOAA Newsletter



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March Program:

Our guest speaker will be Karen Pendleton, co-owner of Pendleton Farms, who will speak on Spring gardening ideas

★★★★★ CHAPTER
awarded for

2002 / 2003 / 2005 / 2008
2009 / 2010 / 2011 / 2012

★★★ CHAPTER
awarded for

2004 / 2006 / 2007

President's Comments. . .

I want to begin by expressing my appreciation to Dean for all of his hard work and leadership in 2013. I also appreciate the opportunity afforded me by the membership of the Jayhawk Chapter to lead it in 2014.

This will be a very important year for the U. S. military and its active, retired, and future members. As all of us who have served know, it is the quality of our people that determines the success of every mission. MOAA as the premier advocate for military personnel will be a major voice in shaping this national debate. We in Jayhawk can play a role in this debate by using the information provided to us by MOAA to help in developing our personal opinions and making them known to our elected representatives.

On a local level, the Board and I will work hard to make Jayhawk relevant for our current members, a welcoming place for new members, and a good citizen in the local community through our individual and collective public service efforts.

Ed



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1 March 2014

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*** Reservations should be sent
to Jim Cooper by
12 March**



JAYHAWK CHAPTER NEWS

**CHAPTER DUES (\$20) WERE PAYABLE IN JANUARY
IF YOU HAVE NOT ALREADY DONE SO,
PLEASE SEND YOUR CHECK TO
JIM COOPER, 1115 STONE MEADOWS DRIVE, LAWRENCE, KS 66049-3961**

**IF YOU DO NOT HAVE A PICTURE IN THE CURRENT CHAPTER DIRECTORY
OR WOULD LIKE A MORE RECENT PICTURE, PLEASE CONTACT
JOHN HALLADAY AT OUR MARCH MEETING OR SEND US A PICTURE
BY EITHER E-MAIL OR "SNAIL MAIL" (IN WHICH CASE WE WILL RETURN THE ORIGINAL)**

TAPS

Captain Joseph O. Marzluff, USN (Ret.), one of the founding members of the Jayhawk Chapter, died on January 6, 2014 in Beaufort, South Carolina. He was 92 years old. A native of Chillicothe, Ohio, Joe attended St. Mary's Catholic grade and high schools and in 1938 he enrolled in the School of Engineering at Ohio State University. In those first few weeks of his freshman year he met his future wife, Elizabeth (Betty) Polli, at a Newman Club mixer. His stay at OSU was shortened by the events of those days and he actively pursued an appointment to the U S Naval Academy at Annapolis, and was accepted in August of 1941.

Graduating in June of 1944, Joe embarked upon a 30-year career as a Naval Officer. As an ensign in WWII, he commanded an LST (Landing Ship Tank), participating in the repatriation of Japanese POWs and later participating in and witnessing the Atom Bomb Tests at Bikini Atoll. Tours ashore were in Turkey and as an Assistant Professor in the NROTC unit at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio. In 1957-59 he attended the U. S. Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California, graduating with a Master of Science Degree in Physics and Mathematics. Other sea and shore commands followed, including a tour in Viet Nam in the Mekong Delta and command of the Naval Mine Warfare School in Charleston, South Carolina. His final tour of duty was at the University of Kansas where he was the Professor of Naval Science and Commanding Officer of the NROTC unit. While at KU, he became active in faculty affairs and was elected to the faculty senate and to the faculty executive committee. Upon his retirement from the Navy, Joe was awarded Professor Emeritus status at the University.

Retiring from the military in 1974, Joe had a second career as a real estate broker and developer, retiring completely in 1986.

Joe's wife of 67 years, Betty, predeceased him two years ago. Joe is survived by his three sons, Michael (wife Marcie), a graduate of OSU and a retired neurosurgeon, Charleston, S.C.; Peter (wife Deborah), a U.S. Naval Academy graduate and a retired Rear Admiral, Seabrook, S.C.; and John (wife Colleen), a professor of wildlife science in Snohomish, WA. He is also survived by eight grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

From Kent & Patricia Peterson: Sorry that we have been MIA. Sadly, Patricia's father's funeral was in October, and Kent's mother's funeral was in January. A tough few months for our family. On a happy note, our son Thomas was accepted by the University of Kansas School of Chemical Engineering! Hope to make it to the next meeting. All our best to everyone!

From Bob Ramsdell: Since July 2013 I have been writing a column on estate planning that appears in the Kaw Valley Senior Monthly. The column in the current January issue is appropriate to a New Year's resolution as it addresses putting together a file of information and materials helpful in the event of your incapacity or death. February's column will address virtual assets such as email and online accounts. Free copies of Kaw Valley Senior Monthly can be gotten at the Douglas County Senior Center, Lawrence Library, and other locations. Or you can read them online at www.seniormonthly.net.

**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.**

From Jim McMurray: On January 26th, the community room of the Lawrence Senior Center was dedicated to the memory of the late Colonel Jack Connolly, USA (Ret.), a long-time Jayhawk MOAA Chapter member. Now known as the Colonel Jack Connolly Community Room, it is where Jack led a cadre of volunteers, who completed free income tax preparation and filing services for over 20 years for elderly, low income, and handicapped citizens of Douglas County through the auspices of AARP and the IRS. It was through Col. Connolly's dedicated leadership that this service continues to remain a successful and necessary service to this day.

From Herschel Stroud: We were pleased to be invited to deliver the "Lincoln Lecture" at St. Mary's College in Leavenworth, Kansas. The talk is entitled "Abe and Mary, a Family Portrait". It was advertised in the Kansas City Star and took place on President's Day, February 17. We did it not as Abe and Mary, but appeared as Herschel and Jacque and wearing period attire. St. Mary's College has one of the most extensive Lincoln museum quality possessions in the United States. For us it is a big deal. We have had a couple of good ski trips this winter - two more trips to go.

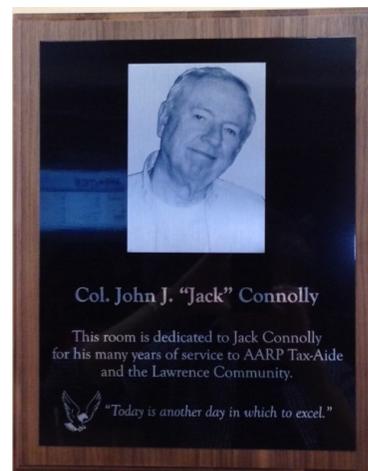
From Charles Heller: Other than my second operation following my cancer removal, my book "In Advance of Fate: Portrait of an Abolitionist" was published appropriately on Lincoln's birthday...finally. The publisher is Star Cloud press and the publisher will have it on Amazon and Barnes & Noble in two weeks. It is the biography of a wealthy manufacturer, George L. Stearns, who was heavily involved in aid to Kansas free state settlers. He was the leader of the "Secret Six" a group of men who supported John Brown. Stearns was a significant financial backer of Brown and personally owned the 200 Sharps rifles Brown brought to Harpers Ferry, not to mention the pikes Brown bought with Stearns' money. He went on to recruit the famous 54th Massachusetts Infantry featured in the film "Glory" as well as the unknown 55th Infantry. Frederick Douglas was one of his recruiters. Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton gave him a direct commission as an "Assistant Adjutant General for the Recruitment of Colored Troops" and he went on to recruit at least 13 other Black regiments. Involved in Emancipation efforts, he goes on to fight for civil rights for African Americans. The book will retail for \$19.95 and I am going to see if the Raven will order copies.

From Jim Cooper: A February trip on Oasis of the Seas

Sandy and I just returned from a cruise aboard Royal Caribbean's Oasis of the Seas with Lynn and Deb O'Neal. Oasis and her sister ship, Allure of the Seas, are currently the world's largest cruise ships, carrying 6,000 passengers and 2000 crew – I was a bit apprehensive as to whether or not we'd be tripping over folks day after day!

First off, our timing was absolutely impeccable – when we left Lawrence on February 7th, temps were hovering around 0 degrees and we'd just had a record-breaking 14" snowfall – we were very anxious for warmer weather! Our weather for the duration of the cruise was fabulous: warm (80s) and sunny the whole time, just a very brief rain shower the night we departed St Thomas. Our itinerary was Eastern Caribbean: Fort Lauderdale to Nassau, Bahamas; Charlotte Amalie, St Thomas, US Virgin Islands; and Phillipsburg, St Martin; and return. The ports were all interesting, but St Martin, which is half Dutch and half French, was our favorite – it was more cosmopolitan, cleaner, and had a wider variety of things to do than the other stops.

As for the Oasis, we had a great time. We had a balcony cabin, and we loved our balcony – kept it open a bit so we could hear the waves all night. The ship has so many venues, restaurants, bars, gathering areas, etc., that the ship seemed to just absorb all those folks – frequently we'd be in a bar or some area which was only half full. The exception was the pool areas, which is to be expected – on our one other cruise, aboard Holland America's Veendam, a smaller ship, the pool area was always crowded as well. Traversing the ship on either the Boardwalk – the large main common walkway – or via Central Park – an open-air deck with live trees and shrubs in a central park-like area, surrounded by the ship's specialty restaurants – we saw a fair number of fellow passengers, but no crowds. Folks seemed to find their favorite areas of the ship and thus it pretty much evened out all over. The service was great – we ate at the main dining room for most meals, and our assigned waiter and her assistant were warm and friendly. The food was very good at the main restaurant, but our favorite meal was at Giovanni's Table, the Italian



specialty restaurant – our waiter brought us so many dishes that we were literally stuffed with food when we finally departed.

The week ended much too soon, as all vacations do. We thoroughly enjoyed our time, including time spent swimming, snorkeling, sunbathing, sightseeing, and eating well.



Army News LTC Storm Reynolds, USA

Greetings Jayhawk Chapter!

It is Spring Semester 2014 and the Jayhawk Battalion is the strongest it's been in more than a decade. Returning from Christmas Break, the Jayhawk Battalion welcomed 21 new Cadets into the Battalion growing our numbers to 123 total Cadets. This is the largest the Battalion has been since 2001. New Cadet Orientation was very successful with an Introduction to the Battalion, advice and guidance from various on-campus student and academic organizations concluding with a meal and hands-on training at the Local National Guard Armory with the Fire Arms Training Simulator



The KU Army ROTC Program is also working to continue the legacy of hosting a world class event with the 20th Anniversary of the Ranger Buddy competition taking place on the 19th of April. This year's events are focused on aspects of the Ranger Creed and will continue to be a top notch physical and mental challenge for all Competitors. More to come as we get closer to the event.

As always, thank you for your support to the Jayhawk Battalion.



Despite the growth in the Cadet Corps, the winter weather has forced the Cadet Staff to be creative and executing training indoors. Lab training outside of Classroom instruction – Cadets received hands-on training covering everything from first aid, weapon training, map reading and squad movement techniques.



Cadets have also received a special reminder of all the Academic Labs and Tutoring opportunities offered by KU as well as information about overseas and language possibilities with the Cultural Understanding/Language Proficiency Program and Project GO.

Check out our website at www.armyrotc.ku.edu for more details on these events, and take a look here <http://armyrotc.ku.edu/2014-ranger-buddy-competition>. Additionally, find us on Facebook <http://www.facebook.com/KUArmyROTC> and follow us on Twitter: http://twitter.com/KU_ArmyROTC

JAYHAWKS LEAD THE WAY!

LTC Storm Reynolds



Navy News

CAPT David Schweizer, USN



Greetings from the Jayhawk Navy!

The Midshipmen of the Jayhawk Battalion have started off the 2014-year on the right foot with intensive drill and physical preparation! Our Midshipmen are highly motivated to be competing in two nation-wide Drill and Physical Fitness competitions in the month of April. We start with University of Nebraska Drill Meet, which includes, Rifle, Pistol, Drill and Color Guard competitions. During the same weekend, four Midshipmen will be competing in the Army Ranger Buddy Challenge in an attempt to beat the Army at their own game. The Midshipmen began preparing for these competitions last semester and have demonstrated exceptional physical and mental endurance. We expect great competition, but we are confident our Midshipman will bring home the lion's share of trophies! The Armed Drill, Color Guard and shooting teams have been hard at work under the instruction of the AMOI, Gunnery Sergeant Hakim. Gunnery Sergeant Hakim, a former Drill Instructor at MCRD San Diego and Officer Candidate School, brings a vast knowledge of close order drill, marksmanship and physical conditioning. With his expert guidance, the Midshipmen are developing the tools they need to be the best.



Drill Team

We recently bid farewell to one of our deeply respected and admired staff members, LT Jon Duenas. Jon is enroute to Newport, RI to begin a nine-month tactical training pipeline, which will culminate with his assignment to a Ballistic Missile Defense capable Destroyer home-

ported in Rota, Spain. LT Duenas, a Surface Warfare Officer, was the advisor for our freshman and sophomore Navy Option Midshipmen and will be sorely missed. We wish LT Duenas the best of luck as he returns “home” to the Surface Warfare community! While a strong officer is leaving the unit, we would also like to congratulate two newly commissioned officers from the Jayhawk battalion, Ensigns Justin Davis and Brandon Ware (right). Both were commissioned after the winter graduation and will be on their way to beautiful Pensacola, FL to begin aviation training. Both also just returned from a week in England, using their Space - A benefits. Congratulations are also in order for MIDN 4/c Kieran Bateman who earned a very competitive and well-deserved College Program Marine Corps Scholarship.



Ensigns Ware & Davis with CAPT Schweizer

Our Midshipmen continue to excel in academics and physical fitness, and we are very excited to see what this semester has in store for these fine young men and women. As I've offered in the past, if you ever get down, need a jolt of energy, need motivation, or become sour with the world – please stop by and talk to any of the midshipmen – they'll pick you right up by virtue of their energy, optimism and brilliance. You'll walk away with a bounce in your step and know the future of the Navy AND America is bright indeed.

CAPT David Schweizer



Air Force News

LtCol Brian Salmans, USAF

Hello from Det 280, the Flying Jayhawk Wing,

The cadets have been busy planning a semester of leadership learning objectives. A primary training objective is to prepare many of our cadets for field

training attendance this summer. This training includes everything from marching, physical fitness, leadership development, expeditionary Air Force concepts, and

hygienic rules for training such as the proper method for making your bunk and folding your clothes while at field training. Additionally, the cadets are finalizing our hands-on training events to include our spring semester field leadership exercise (FLX). The FLX is designed to give the cadets a first-hand experience -- an opportunity to experience first-hand what Air Force operations are like in an austere, expeditionary environment. They will learn how to move and communicate in the battlefield, and about "local national" cultural interactions that may occur in a deployed environment. Other training events include a land navigation course, and Survival, Evasion, Resistance, and Escape (SERE) training event. Plans are in place for our other normal events, which include our annual and semester awards ceremony and joint commissioning. Finally, the Cadets will have the opportunity to learn about different career fields in the Air Force at the Det 280 Career Day. We will have 25 officers from a variety of career fields providing presentations and answering questions about their particular experiences on active duty. Later this semester we will have one of our mandatory requirements for this semester, the cadets' physical fitness assessment (PFA). The PFA is comprised of pushups, sit-ups, and a mile and a half run. There is never a dull moment here at the 280th.

This year, we have submitted 16 cadets for continuation in our advanced program. The Enrollment Allocation (EA) process is what determines which

cadets in the Air Force ROTC program will get a commission. The EA process is very competitive. A board at AFROTC headquarters will meet in March to determine which of our 16 will get an EA. The board looks at the detachment commander's ranking, GPA, physical fitness test results, and academic aptitude scores to make their determination. We wish our cadets the best of luck through this demanding process.

Four of our cadets have received a slot for pilot duty. The well-deserved individuals were cadets Justin Berndt, Carl Painter, Chelsea Lotz, and John Toner. Another good news story is that we will be able to compete several of our cadets at the Headquarters (HQ) Air Force ROTC In-College Scholarship Program board.

Finally, we welcome a new member to our team, Lt Nathaniel Cunningham (a 2010 KU graduate). Lt Cunningham is a finance officer who has transferred here from Malmstrom AFB, Montana.

MOAA Jayhawk Chapter, thank you again for your support. Detachment 280 is looking forward to another great semester educating and training our Air Force's future officers.

Very Respectfully,

Lt Col Brian Salmans

Commander, Air Force ROTC Det 280

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, 03 Jan. 2014:

Selected Legislative Goals for 2014

- * Active/Reserve Force/Family Issues
- * Sustain active duty, Guard and Reserve force sizes to meet mission requirements
- * Sustain military pay comparability with private sector
- * Protect currently serving and retiree benefits against severe, arbitrary sequestration cuts
- * Credit all post-9/11 active duty service toward Guard/Reserve early retirement
- * Restore tax deduction for reservists' out-of-pocket expenses for military travel of 50 miles or more
- * Create new incentives for employers to hire and retain drilling Guard/Reserve members
- * Provide incentives for employers/government/contractors to hire military spouses

- * Protect funding for commissary/exchange, dependent schools and family support programs
- * Require better education on serious financial disadvantages of the REDUX retirement option
- * Improve professional licensure transferability for service members and military spouses
- * Ensure Service sexual assault and suicide prevention measures provide positive outcomes

Health Care Issues

- * Avert 25% Medicare/TRICARE payment cut and fix statutory formula to improve access to care
- * Protect against increasing TRICARE fees beyond COLA-cap
- * Oppose enrollment fee for TRICARE Standard and TFL For Life or curtailment of TRICARE Standard or TFL coverage
- * Oppose means-testing TRICARE benefit

- * Improve access for all beneficiaries by making participation in TRICARE more attractive to providers
- * Improve seamless transition and protect Defense and VA health/benefits/support systems budgets
- * Authorize option to subsidize retention of operational reservists' civilian family health insurance
- * Increase orthodontia payment cap under active duty dental plan
- * Authorize TRICARE coverage for Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) for active and retired members of all the uniformed services

Retirement/Survivor Issues

- * Oppose military benefit changes that are inconsistent with service career sacrifices
- * Preserve full-inflation cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs)
- * End deduction of VA disability compensation from military retired pay
- * End deduction of VA survivor benefits (DIC) from military Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) annuities
- * Implement a more equitable military disability retirement system
- * Restore VA DIC compensation for qualifying survivors who remarry after age 55
- * Reform SBP calculation for a reservist who dies performing IDT as for active duty deaths
- * Authorize survivors to retain a deceased retiree's full final-month retired pay
- * Authorize SBP annuities to be paid to Special Needs Trusts for permanently disabled children
- * Reform the Uniformed Services Former Spouse Protection Act (USFSPA)
- * Implement full Space-A travel for 'gray area' Guard-Reserve retirees and qualifying survivors

Veterans and Other Issues

- * Eliminate VA claims backlog and improve quality, efficiency, transparency, of VA claims-processing
- * Establish Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits for surviving spouses of Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts
- * Extend advance (2 year) funding authority to all VA accounts, not only health care
- * Improve VA health services and access for women veterans
- * Review caregiver legislation to provide legislative proposals to address remaining gaps
- * Authorize pre-tax payment of health, dental and long-term care premiums
- * Reduce Social Security penalties for certain civil service and state retirees/survivors
- * Prevent disproportional Social Security/Medicare penalties for any population segment

MOAA Legislative Update, 10 Jan. 2014:

Big Vets Bill Blocked

Just before the holidays, S. 944, a so-called "Omnibus" package that bundles many bills previously approved by the

Senate Veterans Affairs Committee (SVAC), was brought to the Floor for a vote by panel Chairman Bernie Sanders, I-VT.

The bill would enhance education benefits for veterans and certain surviving spouses, enhance other survivor benefits, expand health care, outreach and employment services and require quarterly reports on the backlog of veterans' claims, among other upgrades.

Among other upgrades, S. 944 (Omnibus) would:

- * Require public colleges to charge the in-state rate for all veterans who enroll within three years of separation from active duty as a condition for schools to retain GI Bill funding
- * Permit surviving spouses who receive dependency and indemnity payments (DIC) from the VA to retain the pay if they remarry at age 55
- * Increase DIC for survivors with children for each month over a three-year period from the date of entitlement — currently, the increase is limited to a two-year period
- * Authorize the Gunnery Sergeant Fry Scholarships — essentially, the P-9/11 GI Bill — to the surviving spouses of the Afghanistan and Iraq conflicts
- * Extend authority for Yellow Ribbon matching funds under GI Bill programs to Gunnery Fry Scholarship participants
- * Establish that career reservists with no service under active duty orders may be honored as veterans
- * Expand complementary and alternative therapies, prosthetics and chiropractic care at VA medical facilities
- * Extend the date of eligibility from 1 Jan. 1957 to 1 Aug. 1953 for health care for veterans and their dependents exposed to contaminated water at Camp LeJeune
- * Require the VA to provide medical exams, counseling and treatment for veterans who file for disability based on military sexual trauma
- * Require states to consider military training for the purpose of issuing state licenses and credentials to veterans

Senator Sanders offered the bill for a "unanimous consent" Floor vote, since the measure was fully funded under 'PAYGO' rules and enjoyed bi-partisan Committee support. But Senator Coburn objected that there was inadequate consultation on the measure and wrote a letter to Senator Mitch McConnell, R-KY, the Minority Leader, citing his objections. The Senator disputed that the bill is paid for and objected to the in-state tuition provision, among other concerns.

The 'hold' on the bill means that 2013 ended with a lump of coal for veterans who "have borne the battle and their widows and orphans," as President Lincoln famously said.

MOAA and our Military Coalition partners are urging all members of the Senate to resolve the impasse as soon as possible and send S. 944 (Omnibus) to the House.

Retirement Commission Deadline Delayed

The FY13 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) established a 9 member independent commission to review all military compensation, benefits and retirement. Its findings

and final recommendations could have a major impact on future decisions regarding military compensation, benefits and retirement.

The commission has been instructed by President Obama to not alter the current retirement system for those already serving, retired or in the process of retiring. Along with a review of military compensation, the President asked that the commission look at the “interrelationship of the military’s current promotion system...as well as associated force shaping tools.”

The president has stated that the commission must review “the full breadth of the systems,” including healthcare, military family support, and any federal programs that could influence the decision of current or future servicemembers to stay in uniform or leave the service.

The commission is tasked with studying and making recommendations on a wide range of topics, including:

- * manpower and compensation
- * living standards
- * pay
- * effectiveness
- * flexibility
- * motivation to advance

Before making their final recommendations to the President, the Commission must examine the impacts of proposed recommendations on currently serving members, retirees, spouses, children and survivors; DoD-specific programs such as pay and retirement, MWR, commissaries, exchanges, housing, dependent schools; DoD and VA programs such as health care, disability, survivor, education, dependent support; Department of Education Impact Aid; and support/funding to states, territories, colleges and universities.

The commission’s report was originally due May 14, 2014, but the FY2014 Defense Authorization Act delayed the final report until February 2015.

Imminent Danger Pay Areas Cut

DoD announced that after reviewing security and budgetary concerns it has decided to remove 20 areas from the list of locations that qualify for imminent danger pay (IDP). The change will take effect June 1, 2014 and will impact tens of thousands of servicemembers.

Locations no longer qualifying as imminent danger areas are:

- * Four water areas; the Arabian Sea, Gulf of Aden, Gulf of Oman and the Red Sea.
- * The water of and air space above the Persian Gulf.
- * Six land areas and air space above Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Serbia and Montenegro.
- * Nine land areas; East Timor, Haiti, Liberia, Oman, Rwanda, Tajikistan, United Arab Emirates, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan.

Those serving in the above locations will no longer qualify for the \$225 monthly IDP.

This is DoD’s first review of IDP locations since 2007.

Defense officials conducted the periodic review and recertification of the IDP areas in coordination with the Joint Staff, combatant commands and the military services.

IDP will continue for Iraq, Afghanistan, Lebanon, Jordan, Pakistan, Syria, Yemen, and Egypt.

MOAA Legislative Update, 17 Jan. 2014:

The Military/Civilian Divide

By Col. Mike Hayden, USAF (Ret)

The recent passage of the Bipartisan Budget Act (BBA) was trumpeted as a bipartisan, two-year, sequestration-alleviating budget deal.

But, in reality, the budget deal was a backroom, eleventh-hour pact that was rushed through both the House and Senate before the holidays, bypassing the committees of jurisdiction and highlighting a growing military/civilian divide that fails to recognize the necessary sacrifice that comes with two decades of service.

Even though the budget deal would help ease the harmful effects of sequestration for two years for the Pentagon, doing so on the backs of servicemembers who serve our nation for more than 20 years is disgraceful.

Fortunately, several members of Congress — now that they have seen the harmful effect of the change — have introduced more than 17 bills to repeal some or all of the COLA provision.

But there are still critics, including many members of the press, who are supporting the COLA cut, calling it exceedingly modest to “a military pension plan that is already far more generous than private-sector equivalents.”

What has caused these critics to believe the military pension is out of line?

It started when our own uniformed and civilian leaders within the Pentagon created the perfect storm, providing political top cover to slash pay and benefits with their repeated, alarming, and false claims about “exploding” personnel cost growth.

The bottom-line: Until you can adjust the conditions of service for those in uniform to be more “civilian-like,” stop trying to compare the two.

MOAA Legislative Update, 24 Jan. 2014:

Services: Recruitment Challenges Ahead:

While all the services, except the Army Reserve, have met or exceeded recruiting goals to date, the department faces a number of significant obstacles in the years ahead,” stated Virginia Penrod, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Military Personnel Policy in testimony before the House Armed Services Military Personnel Subcommittee.

The past several years have seen some of the best military recruits in history, as the civilian job market shrank in many places and the services established large, well-funded recruiting teams at the height of the Iraq War.

But as the U.S. economy gets back on track — unemployment recently fell below 7 percent for the first time in five years — DoD’s recruiting commands are bracing for potential challenges.

“We recognize this trend will be unsustainable as the economy continues to improve and competition to draw recruits from a small, qualified talent pool, who are alarmingly less inclined to choose military service as a career, increases dramatically,” said Brig. Gen. Gina Grosso, Air Force director of force management policy.

Grosso and other top Pentagon recruiting officials testified on January 16 to report on the current state of military recruiting.

The Army is already seeing signs of a preliminary recruiting slowdown. Last year, the Army had enough people signed up in the Delayed Entry Program (DEP) to fill about half of its annual recruiting goal. But today the DEP pool is only about one-third full.

MOAA Legislative Update, 07 Feb. 2014:

Drawdown Accelerates

In January 2012, senior DoD leadership unveiled a new defense strategy based on a review of potential future security challenges, current defense strategy, and budgetary constraints. This new strategy envisions a smaller, leaner military that is agile, flexible, rapidly deployable, and technologically advanced. This strategy will rebalance the military's global posture and presence, emphasizing where potential problems are likely to arise, such as the Asia-Pacific region and the Middle East.

As part of this strategy the FY 2013 Defense Authorization Act laid out plans to reduce military force levels by nearly 124,000 over the next five years. With the continued impact of sequestration, the services asked for and received authority to accelerate those drawdown plans if needed.

The bulk of the force reductions will come from the ground forces—the Army and Marine Corps. DoD plans to cut the active end strength of the Army by 14 percent and the Marine Corps by 10 percent.

The overall current stated end strength targets for the services are:

- * 490K Army — a reduction of 80K;
- * 182K USMC — a reduction of 20K;
- * 319.5K Navy — a reduction of 6K;
- * 328.6K for the Air Force — a reduction of 4K.

The Reserve components would also be reduced by 21.5K over the same period. These force reductions could also be deeper depending on budget constraints and reassessments by the services and DoD.

The reductions in force are projected to be completed by 2017, but the Army will now reach their stated initial active component end strength target of 490K by 2015 — two years earlier than originally planned.

The reductions in force size will be completed by a combination of actions.

First, the services will tightly control future accessions. Second, they will employ a variety of voluntary and involuntary tools authorized by Congress to reach their target end strengths.

Involuntary tools include: Selective Early Retirement Boards — both the Army and Marine Corps have recently held SERB boards; and Reduction in Force (RIF) boards — the Army is scheduled to hold its first RIF board in March.

Voluntary tools include: Voluntary Separation Pay; Temporary Early Retirement Authority; and the Voluntary Early Release Program.

MOAA is sensitive to the budget reduction requirements imposed on the services, and does not oppose a force drawdown, but believes after almost thirteen years of conflict

DoD must use all of the tools authorized with a strong emphasis on the voluntary incentive tools.

The men and women who comprise the all-volunteer force have shown versatility, adaptability, and commitment, enduring the constant stress and strain of two overlapping conflicts. They deserve nothing less.

MOAA Supports Mental Health Survey

Despite years of attention in the media and from senior VA and DoD leaders, PTSD and depression among veterans and servicemembers remains a serious problem. DoD and the VA have gone to great lengths to combat and destigmatize these issues, but despite important efforts, research continues to demonstrate that many prefer to seek help from civilian providers.

Therefore, civilian mental health providers are an increasingly important part of the overall behavioral health workforce addressing veterans' mental health needs.

MOAA Legislative Update, 14 Feb. 2014:

What's On The Chopping Block?

With the COLA cut now behind us, MOAA looks ahead to another round of proposed cuts expected in the administration's FY 2015 budget request. In his February column of "The Bottom Line," MOAA Director of Government Relations, Col. Mike Hayden, USAF (Ret) takes a look at the personnel programs likely to come under fire in the months ahead.

February 12, 2014

By Col. Mike Hayden, USAF (Ret)

During a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing on the COLA cuts for working-age military retirees established in the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013 (BBA), Pentagon witnesses repeatedly talked about curbing military personnel costs. It became crystal clear the Pentagon does not intend to wait until the Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission (MCRMC) completes its review in February 2015 to start adjusting currently serving compensation and benefit programs.

So what's on the chopping block? We don't have a crystal ball, but the following forms of pay and benefits have emerged as leading candidates:

- * capping pay raises or even freezing pay;
- * making additional end-strength cuts;
- * changing basic allowance for housing to make servicemembers assume more of the costs;
- * reducing the commissary benefit savings; and
- * means-testing TRICARE fees and establishing TRICARE For Life/TRICARE Standard enrollment fees.

These and maybe more are facing the chopping block. More clarity will surface once the budget rolls out March 4.

MOAA Legislative Update, 21 Feb. 2014:

TFL Rx Changes in March

Beginning March 15, TRICARE For Life (TFL) beneficiaries will be required to fill maintenance medication

prescriptions refills through the TRICARE Home Delivery (mail-order) pharmacy system.

Beneficiaries can opt out of this requirement after using the mail-order refill system for one year.

The new requirement stems from the FY 2013 defense authorization bill. In a bipartisan compromise to avoid large, across-the-board TRICARE pharmacy co-pay increases, Congress included a mandatory mail-order pilot program for TFL beneficiaries to offset the cost.

Mail-order pharmacy delivery lowers costs for both beneficiaries and DoD. A 90-day refill of generic medication is free through the mail-order pharmacy, but costs \$5 per 30 day refill at a retail drug store. For brand name medications the cost is \$13 for a 90 day refill through mail-order versus \$17 for a 30 day refill at a retail store.

The mandate applies to a [group of brand name](#) maintenance medications. Generic medications are exempt from the mail order requirement. If the beneficiary has not switched to home delivery or to a military treatment facility, starting with the third fill of that same medication after March 14, the beneficiary will be responsible for the entire cost of the medications if obtained from a retail pharmacy.

All initial prescriptions can still be filled at a retail store, and beneficiaries can receive up to two 30 day refills at a retail store during the transition.

Beneficiaries living near a military hospital or clinic may continue to fill their prescriptions on base and do not need to enroll in the mail order program. Additionally, those with other prescription coverage and those living overseas also are exempt.

Nursing home patients are also eligible for exemption from the mail order requirement. Caregivers can call the number below with prescription information to opt out, and Express Scripts will also be reaching out to nursing homes to assist with the process.

TRICARE will begin reaching out to affected beneficiaries over the next month. You can enroll online or over the phone at 1-877-882-3335.

Individual waivers to opt out of the requirement may be granted on a case-by-case basis due to personal need or hardship, emergency, or other special circumstance.

MOAA Hosts Spouse Symposium

Published by C.C. at 9:47 am under vents, Military Family Readiness, Military Spouse Employment Survey, military spouse jobs, Military Spouse Unemployment Compensation, MOAA Spouse Symposium

MOAA hosted its 8th Annual Military Spouse Symposium in San Antonio, Texas last week thanks to our executive sponsor, JPMorgan Chase & Co., our gold sponsor, Mercer Consumer, and bronze sponsor, Sittercity.

This year, we added a new dimension to our professional development conference by including a networking event the evening before sponsored by La Quinta Inns & Suites.

The MOAA Spouse Symposium goal was to inform, empower and inspire the over 250 spouses in attendance.

The symposium kicked off with a presentation of the inaugural Military Spouse Employment Survey results.

MOAA partnered with Syracuse University's Institute of Veterans and Military Families (IVMF) to focus on military

spouses and their career opportunities while navigating the military lifestyle.

This research project contributes to a body of knowledge that provides policy makers with the information necessary to pool resources for military families and spouses, in order to increase the spouses' chances of obtaining steady employment, earning wages equivalent to those of their civilian peers, and advancing along professional career paths in spite of PCS moves.

The Major of San Antonio, Julian Castro, made a special appearance as a guest speaker. He offered heartfelt words of gratitude by thanking all the spouses for their family's service and sacrifice.

COLA Watch

January COLA

The Consumer Price Index jumped up in January to 230.040. It now stands only 0.1 percent below the FY2014 COLA baseline of 230.327.

COLAs and Military Retired Pay

Government retired pay promises must be kept, including annual cost-of-living adjustments (COLA) to prevent erosion of retirees' purchasing power by inflation.

Retired Pay versus Active Duty Pay Adjustments

Retired pay and active duty pay increases are different in most years because they are based on different compensation principles.

Military Spouse Employment Report

On September 16th, The Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) and Syracuse University's Institute for Veterans and Military Families (IVMF) launched a survey titled: [The Military Spouse Employment Survey](#). The Survey, administered online for 30 days, provided a platform for all military spouses to share their challenges of employment while trying to navigate the military lifestyle.

The overarching objective of this research project was to evaluate the cumulative economic impact on Armed Forces spouses who may be unable to sustain employment due to Permanent Change of Station (PCS) moves, licensure constraints, and lack of career enhancing opportunities.

This research project contributes to a body of knowledge that provides policy makers with the information necessary to pool resources for military families and spouses, in order to increase the spouses' chances of obtaining steady employment, earning wages equivalent to those of their civilian peers, and advancing along professional career paths in spite of PCS moves.

Read the [Military Spouse Employment Survey Results Summary](#)



JAYHAWK CHAPTER MOAA



A membership meeting will be held **Tuesday, 18 March 2014**, at the Lawrence Country Club.

Dinner cost is **\$24.00/meal**.

The Program: Our guest speaker will Karen Pendleton, co-owner of Pendleton Farms, who will speak on Spring gardening ideas

Social Hour: 1800 hours **Dinner:** 1845 hours

The Menu: Pork loin, vegetable, rolls, salad, tea or coffee and dessert

Send your reservation and check payable to Jayhawk Chapter MOAA to arrive no later than **Wednesday, 12 March 2014**, 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 Cooper at 842-7037 or John Halladay at 843-6184.

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

The cost is **\$24.00 per meal**. I am enclosing a check for \$_____ for meal(s).

Chapter Dues (\$20.00) \$_____

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

**Thank you for receiving
the newsletter via e-mail !!
It saves the Chapter for both
printing and postage.**

2014 Meeting Schedule:

Tuesday 18 March 2014

Tuesday 20 May 2014

Tuesday 15 July 2014

Tuesday 16 September 2014

Tuesday 18 November 2014



One Association, One Voice. Yours.

Newsletter Editor

Jayhawk Chapter, MOAA

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