

MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA
ALAMO CHAPTER



THE



LARIAT

Volume 29, Number 8



August 2009



Partnership & Advocacy by Exec Vice President

Over the past several months, as the President of the Texas Council of Chapters, I have spent countless hours in Austin, at the Capitol, advocating for bills to be passed that would benefit our membership and the active military member, Guard, Reserves, spouses, children and Veterans.

In doing that, I have had to work with both Republicans and Democrats, liberals and conservatives, but at all times, they understood that I was advocating for my constituency on a totally non-partisan basis. They also understood that I represented a constituency that represented millions of voters in the state, who if they didn't please them to one degree or another, could turn on them and make life very uncomfortable for them!

This type of non-partisan advocacy is the same that is practiced at the National level by our MOAA representatives who represent us at the US Congress. As many can see, this type advocacy has been very effective and MOAA has helped achieve getting the Congress to address many issues that affect the military, its families and veterans as well as our own membership.

The effectiveness of this type advocacy is evident in the fact that the President has met with our National President, Vice-Admiral Norb Ryan on multiple occasions to get his input on matters related to the military and veterans. It is also evident in that he is heard by the Secretary of Defense. It is evident in that *The Hill* newspaper, in Washington praised MOAA for its being one of the most effective advocacy groups before the Congress. It is further evident that each April, each states representatives are anxious to hear what their MOAA State Councils and constituents are talking about legislatively during the *Storming of the Hill*.

In the past several months, I have, however, observed a disturbing trend with some of our membership and with some Chapters, where partisanship has been creeping in with articles, statements and internet e-mails. This has bothered me a great deal, because I do not want this to harm the carefully nurtured idea that we, as MOAA and MOAA representatives are non-partisan when it comes to what we are advocating.

It is fine for us to have our own political beliefs and opinions, but when there is any hint that we are representing the individual MOAA Chapter, the Texas Council or the National MOAA, we MUST leave our partisanship at the door! If we don't, we run the real risk of undermining our standing with politicians whom we want to influence for the

greater good of our constituency.

I would ask that our membership and Chapter leaders take this to heart and cease any hint of partisanship when representing their Chapter, Council or National to the public or politicians!

Maj Jim Cunningham (Ret)

Save The Dates!

August 27 - Luncheon
Speaker: Gene Habiger
Four Star General
Ft Sam Golf Club

September 23 - Picnic
Theme: Oktoberfest
RAFB Eberle Park

October 22 - Luncheon
Lackland Gateway Club

November 19 - Luncheon
RAFB Parr Officers Club

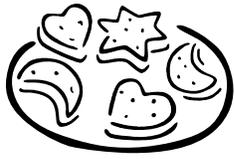
December 11 - Christmas Party
RAFB Parr Officers Club



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Chapter News & Notices



Cookie Angels

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

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

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

Volunteer Opportunities

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

- VP Programs
- Golf Tournament Organizer 2010
- Assistant Programs
- Active Duty Liaison Officers
- Chaplain
- Transportation Coordinator
- Legal Counsel
- Historian
- VP Logistics

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

In Memoriam

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

Margie Peeler
 Spouse of Col John Peeler USMC
 (Ret)
 06/21/2009

Cmdr Thomas Baker USN (Ret)
 Spouse of LtCol Therese Slone
 Baker
 07/18/2009

Maj Frank Parks USA (Ret)
 7/24/2009



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

Hedi West
 Lt Thomas Pierce USA (Ret)

July 4 Ceremony at Ft Sam Houston National Cemetery



Alamo Chapter wreath and members
 MAJ Jim Cunningham, LCDR Gil Rodriguez & MAJ Wendy Weller



Fife & Drum Corp



LEGISLATIVE REPORT

It is with great sadness we report the passing of the author of this very important and informative column.

Major Frank Parks USA (Ret), Vice President for Legislative Affairs for the Alamo Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA), in San Antonio and longtime leader and member of same, passed away on July 24, 2009. He is survived by his wife of almost 54 years, Helga and his children and grandchildren.

His funeral took place at the Zoellner Funeral Home in New Braunfels, Texas on July 30, 2009, and he was laid to rest with full military honors at the Ft. Sam Houston National Cemetery in San Antonio. Helga had requested that in lieu of flowers donations be made to the Alamo Chapter Scholarship Fund.

Frank retired from the Army in November 1974. During his military career he served in various locations in the United States, almost 8 years in Germany and 2 1/2 years in Vietnam. Frank graduated with a Bachelor's Degree from the University of Omaha and a Master of Public Administration Degree from North Carolina State University. Frank started a second career in public service as City Manager of the City of Weimar, Texas in October, 1975. He directed and worked with the municipal utilities and Police and Fire Departments. Frank served in the position until he retired in December, 1998.

In addition to his service on the MOAA staff, Frank was active with the Texas Municipal League and Texas City Managers Association. He also served on the Board and as Secretary of BCL of Texas (business and Community Lenders.) Frank served on the Board of Directors and president of the Texas Public Power Association. Frank was active in the Lions Club and a Grand Knight of the Knights of Columbus.

Frank was a good friend to all who knew him and was a great asset to his community and the Alamo Chapter. He will be missed.

Viet Nam Era Reunion

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

What: 2009 Reunion

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

When: 12-15 August 2009

POC: Bill Filippini

210-545-4370 (H)

210-884-9027 (C)

flipsue@stic.net

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

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* Loans are subject to credit approval. Vehicle loan rates and terms are based on your credit rating, your relationship with us and other factors. Payment per \$1,000 is approximately \$16.82 per month for 66 months at 3.7% APR based on deferment of first payment for 60 days. Interest will accrue from loan date to the first payment date. Loan term will be based upon amount financed, collateral, and mileage. Rates and terms are subject to change without notice. Longer loan terms are available at different rates. Call our Consumer Lending Center for more details. Some restrictions may apply.

Letters to the Editor

The statement in the article on page 10 of the July Lariat that states "tricare fees that have not changed since the program began some 13 years ago" is misleading.

In 1995 Champus became Tricare but was governed by the same 1996 law. Benefits ended when an individual reached medicare age. 30 October 2000 Tricare for Life entitlement, Public law 106-398, was signed by the President. This law was effective 1 October 2001. On 1 April 2001 Pharmacy portion started.

LTC Joe Newell, USA (Ret)

Editors Response: The writer of the article could have perhaps been a bit clearer at that point in the article that you quoted, but he is essentially correct. Tricare enrollment fees for Tricare Prime have not increased in the past thirteen years. Tricare Standard, Tricare Extra and Tricare for Life have never had enrollment fees. Later in the second column, the author, Mr. McMichael made some clarification where he said basically the same thing. The June 2009 Congressional Budget Office report, titled The Effects of Proposals to Increase Cost Sharing in TRICARE said the following: "The enrollment fees, deductibles, and copayments that TRICARE beneficiaries pay today have remained the same (or even been reduced) since the mid-1990s, when the program was first set up. For example, the cost today for a 45-year-old military retiree to enroll his or her family in the TRICARE program's managed care plan, TRICARE Prime, is \$460 per year—the same cost in nominal terms that prevailed in 1995.

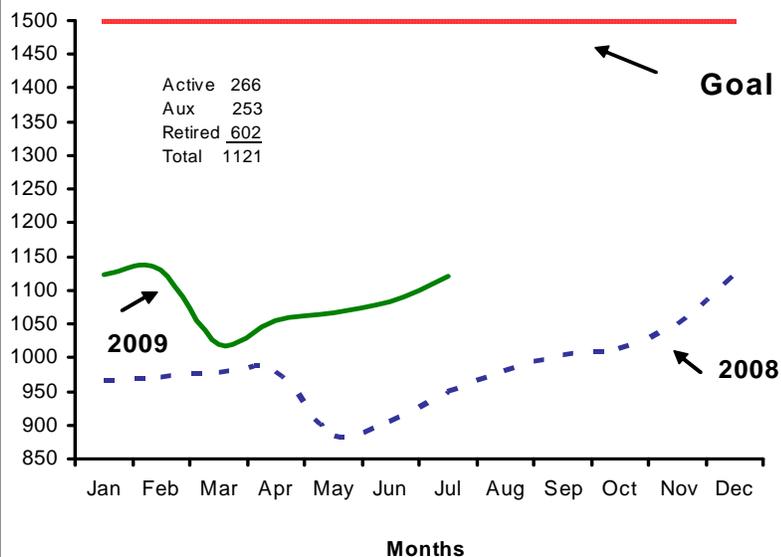
Welcome New Members!

BGen Eddie Cain, USA (Ret)
 Col Bertie Alexander, USA (Ret)
 Col Robert Barnhardt, USAF (Col)
 Col Tim Cleveland, USA (Ret)
 Col Thomas Cropper
 Col Damian Heaney, USA (Ret)
 Col Donald Hessenflow, USAF (Ret)
 Col Thomas Kilpatrick, USA (Ret)
 Col Edgar Marshall Jr, USA (Ret)
 LTC Kenneth Klock, USA
 LTC Peter Lehning, USA
 LTC Marc Matier, USA
 LtCol Daniel Mayer, USAF
 LCDR Robert Patton, USN (Ret)
 Maj Wendy Cox, USA
 Maj Robert Holcek, USA
 Maj Doug Swift, USA
 Maj Alfonso Viera, USAF (Ret)
 Maj Ben Winters, USAF (Ret)

Maj George Wood USAR
 Cpt Norma Alaniz, USA
 Cpt Chris Baglio, USA
 Cpt Brent Connelly, USA
 Cpt Peter Hottenstein, USAF (Ret)
 Cpt Joshua Hu, USAF
 Cpt Rachel Marsh, USA
 Cpt Matthew Perry, USA
 Cpt Carolyn Watson, USA
 Lt Thomas Pierce, USA (Ret)
 2Lt Shawntay Barnes, USA
 2Lt Ryan Burkholder, USA
 2Lt Justin Hell, USA
 CW2 Robert Manning, USA
 CW2 Bill Strout, USA (Ret)
 CW3 Michael Robert, USA
 CW3 Roy Rucker, USA
 WO1 Jason Jonas, USA
 Loretta Peterson

Alamo Chapter Membership

As of: July 15, 2009





President's Message

As I sit here and reflect on what I would like to present in our newsletter for August it occurs to me that we are experiencing an incredibly hot summer here in San Antonio complete with very little rain and adverse weather conditions that we must adjust to and make do with as God has given us. But as incredibly hot and rain free as our summer goes, I cannot help but think that our weather conditions are certainly not as adverse and not as extreme as what many of you experienced in fighting during WWII, the Korean War theatre, the Vietnam War and, of course, most recently in Iraq and Afghanistan. I guess what I'm saying is that everything is relative and when you take it from that perspective, what we are experiencing here is very kind and very mild indeed.

Of course we just experienced our country's birthday, the Fourth of July. I was so blessed that my entire family was able to be together to experience the celebration of the Fourth, to experience the good feelings of living in America and to think about the freedoms we have. During that wonderful time together with my family I had the nice occasion of being on a freshwater lake in Wisconsin, and I found myself on the evening of the Fourth of July sitting in a comfortable lawn chair enjoying a cool libation and looking out over the lake to see "the rockets red glare, and the bombs bursting in air." Of course, we know I was watching the fireworks that were going on around the lake. But much more importantly as I watched the "rockets" being launched into the air I thought back to my numerous experiences at the Ft Sam Houston National Cemetery and observing the many markers there that remind us of those in distant and current wars who have paid the price to see that you and I and our loved ones can sit lakeside and watch a demonstration to celebrate the birth of our country. "Freedom Isn't Free".

People like us could say it is an over used phrase but in my opinion it could never be overused. I would ask each of you wonderful members who stay loyal to your chapter to reflect and say a silent prayer for our country. Think about what it has meant to us and what we want it to continue to mean for those children and grandchildren and posterity that will come down the trail.

Along those lines we have an obligation; those of you who have patriotically served in the past, those serving now and in the future, to do our best to advocate so that the benefits our military have are not eroded, eliminated or become a cost expense factor that many could never afford. I therefore ask each of you to carefully read the editorial presented by our Executive Vice President and current President of the Texas Council of Chapters, Jim Cunningham, on the importance of advocacy and how we make sure our word is heard and listened to and acted upon.

The most important thing Jim is expressing is advocating or advocacy is not partisan politics; it is the absolute opposite. It is nonpartisanship that we must stay focused on. Our concern is not whether a person is a Republican or a Democrat. It is about a person who is a great American and who is supporting those entitlements we earned and should be continued. I ask all of you to be advocates for this important cause. Don't just take them for granted. Be active, write letters, make calls, and do what you can do to continue your service to America. After all even though many of us are no longer shouldering arms or wallowing in the mud and cold in Korea or Vietnam, we must step up and continue to do our best to support those that support America. We have always done that and always will.

That said; please let me remind you we have General Habiger as our guest (Continued on Page 10)

Columbus Holiday in Big Bend 9-12 October 2009



Fall is a great time to visit the Big Bend and the Davis Mountains. This trip will take you west out of the Hill Country and into the cool desert. Enjoy the scenery with mesas to your north and south as you make your way through the Wind Farms east of Ft Stockton. Continuing on towards Belmorea and its vast natural spring, we will split off and head south through Wild Rose Pass to historic Ft. Davis.

Our accommodations are at the historic Limpia Hotel in Ft. Davis. We will visit the McDonald's Observatory and Ft. Davis. Dinner that evening will be at the Hotel. The next day, we head to Alpine. This quaint community sits on the outer edge of the Big Bend. We then head south toward Terlingua and its famous ghost town. We enter the Park a make our way up the mountain to Chisos Lodge where we will spend the next two nights.

The following day, we will tour the Park and have a picnic at St. Elena Canyon. Nothing is quite as spectacular as the moon rising over the Chisos Lodge. Our last day, we will follow Hwy 90 home as it parallels the Rio Grande. Langtry, home of Judge Roy Bean, crossing the Pecos River, Seminole Canyon, Ft. Clarke are some of the great sights on the way home.

Cost includes travel by deluxe Motor Coach, accommodations in Ft. Davis, Big Bend, 3 lunches, 1 dinner, guide and all admissions. Dbl.Occ \$525pp; Single \$630. Deposit \$100 by 10 Sept, balance by 25 Sep.

Make checks payable to: Texas Land and Tour Co. 357 Pike Road, San Antonio, TX 78209. For more info contact John Gibbs 210-822-7483.

Health, Benefits & Welfare

National Resource Directory

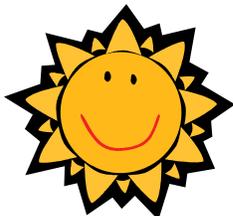
The National Resource Directory (NRD) is an online resource for wounded, ill and injured Service Members, Veterans, their families and those who support them.

The NRD provides information on, and access to, medical and non-medical services and resources across the country which will help them reach their personal and professional goals as they successfully transition from recovery to community living.

The NRD is an online partnership of the Department of Defense, Department of Labor and Department of Veterans Affairs, as well as numerous Veteran service and benefit organizations; non-profit community-based and faith-based organizations; academic institutions, professional associations and philanthropic organizations.

Polytrauma Rehab Center

Mark your calendars for the Department of Veterans Affairs 5th Polytrauma Rehabilitation Center Ground-breaking. The ceremony will be held on August 27, 10 a.m. at the Audie L. Murphy Memorial Veterans Hospital, 7400 Merton Minter Boulevard in San Antonio. For more information, contact Nenette Madla, South Texas Veterans Health Care System Congressional Liaison, (210) 617-5253.



Have a safe and enjoyable summer!

August Speaker Bio



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

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

Many of you know General Habiger, but for those who do not, we have included key components of his Air Force biography for your information. He retired Aug. 1, 1998 as the commander in chief, United States Strategic Command, Offutt Air Force Base, Nebraska. The command had responsibility for all U.S. Air Force and U.S. Navy strategic nuclear forces supporting the national security objective of strategic deterrence.

The general completed Officer Training School in September 1963 as a distinguished graduate. He has held a variety of staff and flying assignments including survival instructor, intelligence support project officer for major weapons systems, major command combat operations planner, executive officer and two Air Staff assignments. Flying assignments include aircraft commander, instructor pilot, operations officer, squadron commander and wing commander in two bomb wings. He is a command pilot with more than 5,000 flying

hours, primarily in bomber aircraft. During the Vietnam War, he flew 150 combat missions and participated in the B-52 Arc Light operations.

EDUCATION

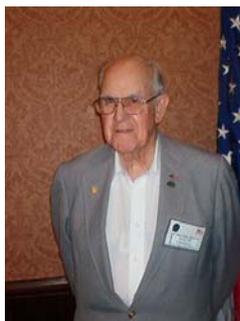
1963 Bachelor of science degree, University of Georgia
 1971 Squadron Officer School, Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala.
 1974 Master of science degree in systems management, George Washington University, Washington, D.C.
 1975 Air Command and Staff College, Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala.
 1982 National War College, Fort Lesley J. McNair, Washington, D.C.
 1986 Executive Management Program, Penn State University
 1988 Program for Senior Executives and National Security Management, Harvard University, Mass.
 1989 Fellow, Seminar XXI Program, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

MAJOR AWARDS AND DECORATIONS

Distinguished Service Medal
 Legion of Merit with oak leaf cluster
 Distinguished Flying Cross
 Defense Meritorious Service Medal
 Meritorious Service Medal with oak leaf cluster
 Air Medal with four oak leaf clusters
 Air Force Commendation Medal with oak leaf cluster
 Humanitarian Service Medal
 Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm

General Habiger is truly a great American, so please save the date and join us on August 27 at the Ft Sam Houston Golf Club for this most informative presentation!

Walter - thanks for the memories!



Walter Grinfield
1921-2009



Solitaires



It was with great sorrow that we said goodbye to a fellow member of the Solitaires. Walter Grinfield was such an integral part of the Solitaires. He will be sorely missed. Walter had surgery for a heart valve replacement and did not survive the surgery.

On the 7 July meeting Joyce Buie, founder of Red Ribbon Corps, Inc. enlisted our aid in making red ribbon loops to be placed on graves at Fort Sam Houston Cemetery on Veterans Day. Although it is currently only a local enterprise, she has hopes to have the idea spread to all national cemeteries,

On the Sunday Brunch, 26 July, our speaker was Mary Vaden. She raises and trains Lhasa Apso dogs as show dogs, and she passed along several of her proven training techniques. Dog training for behavior is the key to raising a well behaved dog. Children and puppies come into the world without manners. To keep them from becoming feral creatures, both need socialization and training to be accepted by society.

Dogs belong in "packs." You and your family are his pack. You must show dominance and be his leader or "alpha dog". As a member of the pack, he needs a job. He needs a job that is his responsibility. Puppies have short attention spans and will need "mini training sessions" several times a day. Do not reward negative behavior. Beating and yelling only reinforce bad behavior. He may obey you, but only from fear not love. Give rewards (praise, food or toys) only when he performs well.

Lack of communication between you and your dog results in bad behavior, i.e. barking, biting, jumping, and chewing. Determine the reason your dog is bark-

ing or reacting in the first place.

Why do dogs bark?

- (1) To express their needs. (They may be lonely, isolated or seeking attention)
- (2) Some are bred to bark. (Terriers and hounds)
- (3) Staking out their territory.
- (4) To alert members of the pack. (You are his pack)
- (5) When playing-sheer excitement.
- (6) If they feel trapped behind a barrier or window.
- (7) Just for fun.
- (8) Express dominance.
- (9) If they feel stressed.

Solutions:

- (1) Obedience training.
- (2) Teach certain commands and use them consistently, such as: quiet, down, sit, lay, stay, come or kennel.
- (3) If your dog whimpers-don't give in or you lose. That rewards him.
- (4) Positive reinforcement teaches your dog to respect and love you.
- (5) "Dog Whisperer" TV show has valuable hints on dog training.

The August meetings will be Tuesday luncheon 4 August at Fort Sam Golf Club and Sunday brunch 23 August at the Randolph Parr Club.

Col Irene Collier (Ret)

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

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

The Ten Things Every American Student Should Know About Our Army in World War II - Part 2 of 3

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

Editor

#5. The U.S. Army for some considerable time after we entered the war was not very good. Part of the WWII mythology is that all the brothers were valiant and all the sisters were virtuous. War is the most human of enterprises, and it reveals every human foible and frailty, as well as human virtues: cowardice and tomfoolery, as well as courage and sacrifice. The Greatest Generation appellation is nonsense. And which generation are we talking about--the generation of senior Army leaders like George Patton, born in 1885, Dwight Eisenhower, born in 1890--or the generation of trigger-pullers, mostly born in the 1910s and 1920s?

In the first couple years of American involvement in WWII the Army was burdened with equipment that in some cases was clearly inferior to the enemy's, tanks being a good example. It was burdened with a number of commanders who were not up to the task: of the first five corps commanders in action against the Germans, three were sacked for incompetence. Our first adversary in the liberation of Europe was the French, and we were hardly brilliant in combat against them.

Those first couple years of war required a sifting out, an evaluation at all levels within the Army of the competent from the incompetent, the physically fit from the unfit. It has sometimes been argued that in an even fight, when you matched one Ameri-

can battalion or regiment against a German battalion or regiment, the Germans tended to be superior, the better fighters. But who said anything about an even fight? Global war is a clash of systems. Which system can generate the combat power needed to prevail, whether it's in the form of= the 13,000 Allied warplanes available on D-day; the 10:1 American advantage in artillery ammunition often enjoyed against the Germans; or the ability to design, build, and detonate an atomic bomb? Which system can produce the men capable of organizing the shipping, the rail and truck transportation, the stupendous logistical demands of global war?

Germany could not muster the wherewithal to cross the English Channel, which is only 21 miles wide, to invade Britain. The United States projected power across the Atlantic, the Mediterranean, and the Pacific and into South-east Asia and the Indian subcontinent. Power-projection, adaptability, versatility, ingenuity, preponderance--these are salient characteristics of the U.S. Army in WWII.

#6. The U.S. Army in WWII comprised much more than just riflemen. It also included, for example, the Army Air Forces, which in turn embodied the single greatest military disparity between us and our enemies: the ability to flatten fifty German cities, to firebomb Tokyo, to reduce Hiroshima and Nagasaki to ashes.

Those fleets of airplanes--a thousand bombers at a time attacking enemy targets--are perhaps the most vivid emblem of the "arsenal of democracy" that outfitted our military and, to some extent, our military allies. The United States built 3.5 million private cars in 1941; for the rest of the war, we built 139. Instead, in 1943 alone, we built

86,000 planes, 45,000 tanks, and 648,000 trucks. We made in that one year 61 million pairs of wool socks; every day, another 71 million rounds of small-arms ammunition spilled from Army munitions plants.

The American war machine was "a prodigy of organization," in Churchill's phrase, derived from a complex industrial society. To service those planes and tanks and trucks required a vast army of support troops within the larger Army, an army that benefited from "the acquaintance of Americans with the gadgetry of American life," from what the historian Russell Weigley called a "confidence born of familiarity with the machine age." All of this gave the U.S. Army a mobility unmatched by any of our adversaries, a mobility that permitted the rapid movement and concentration of firepower. The German army by contrast relied on hundreds of thousands of horses to pull their artillery and to haul supplies.

#7. The Army remained under civilian control throughout the war.

When the president, in July 1942, made the decision to invade North Africa, contrary to the advice of virtually all of his uniformed military advisers, he signed the order: Franklin D. Roosevelt, commander in chief. Harry S. Truman, not the military, made the decision to drop the atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Military strategy, not to mention decision-making, tended to be made during WWII by the civilian leadership, frequently counter to the military's druthers. In *American Strategy in World War II: A Reconsideration* (1982), Kent Roberts Greenfield, a senior Army historian, listed almost two dozen decisions made by Roosevelt

(Continued on Page 10)

Tri Care For Life - Unraveled!

“Tricare for Life --- Very Scary!”

“Possible Reductions Ahead for Tricare for life.”

“The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) has already drafted proposed legislation.”

“Tricare for Life may be in trouble!”

“Tricare in trouble!”

These headlines have been blazing across the internet for some months now and are repeated over and over again.

The result has been many falsehoods, misunderstanding, partisan politics and old information. In addition, there have been many upset Tricare members who are afraid of losing their benefits who frankly are taking these e-mails at face value and not getting the correct and coherent information about what is or is not actually happening regarding Tricare.

First of all Tricare is under the control of the Secretary of Defense and administered for the DoD through contracts with insurance carriers such as Humana. Beginning with the Clinton Presidency, through the Bush Presidency and now with the Obama Presidency, DoD has been looking at ways to reduce the cost of healthcare that it is experiencing with veterans and active duty military personnel and dependants who are using Tricare Standard, Prime and TFL.

DoD, over the last three years, has gone to the Congress on several different occasions with various ideas of increasing cost, reducing services and managing healthcare under Tricare in many different ways. Each time, the Military Coalition in Washington, with MOAA in the lead has beaten back such efforts and nothing has essentially changes over time.

With the current recession and the

renewed look at our country’s healthcare system, there has been much fear that DoD would finally have its way and costs for Tricare in the areas of enrollment and deductibles would be increased dramatically. The Military Coalition and MOAA have come through again and any increases have been put in abeyance until at least 2010 per the SecDef.

What many veterans lose sight of when they read these internet scare stories is that MOAA is in the “breach” and fighting to keep any changes to a reasonable level and that rather than believing what these “bogus” stories are telling them, they should instead consult those that are really in the know such as MOAA. Information in the weekly MOAA legislative reports, the MOAA website, www.MOAA.org and the MOAA Healthcare blog, <http://www.moaablogs.org/healthcare/> are excellent sources of current, accurate and real time information!

A recent article from Colonel Steve Strobridge, Director of Legislative Affairs at MOAA National puts a realistic and practical view of what is likely to happen with Tricare in the future:

Don’t Delude Yourself on TRICARE Fees - By Col. Steve Strobridge, USAF-Ret.

For the last three years, we’ve had to fight mightily to stave off Pentagon proposals for huge increases in TRICARE fees that would have doubled or tripled costs for most retirees under age 65. And for three years, Congress has supported us in barring those big increases. That’s given many military retirees the impression that Congressional leaders think TRICARE fees shouldn’t rise. But that impression couldn’t be more wrong.

What they agree on is that it’s wrong for the Pentagon to keep fees flat for 10+ years and then propose doubling or tripling them in one fell

swoop.

They also agree that Pentagon leaders were out of line in seeking those big increases without first pursuing other obvious ways to holding down defense health costs, such as encouraging more mail-order pharmacy use, implementing preventive care programs, and finding more economies of scale in interservice care delivery. But they also believe that fees can’t stay flat forever, and that’s pretty hard to disagree with that.

There’s simply no way to argue effectively that if it’s reasonable to charge a person X dollars on the day he or she retires from service, then it’s wrong to charge that person even one dollar more 20 or 30 years later, even though his or her retired pay check will have doubled or tripled.

MOAA has never argued that fees should never rise. We’ve said the DoD proposals to double or triple them all at once were wrong, and a breach of faith. Our alternative is simple. Start with congressional recognition that military retirees’ decades of service constitute a huge up-front, in-kind premium. Acknowledge that military retirement (including health) benefits are the primary offset to the extraordinary demands and sacrifices inherent in a military career. And put a statutory limit on annual fee increases so that key decision isn’t left to the whim of any new Secretary of Defense. From MOAA’s standpoint, the right thing is to limit the percentage increase in TRICARE fees to the percentage increase in military retired pay.

For 2010, it doesn’t look like there will be a COLA, so there shouldn’t be any TRICARE fee increase, either.

Another big misunderstanding is that of the role of the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) where Tricare and the Congress are concerned. Each year, the CBO is charged with the responsibility of analyzing areas where (Continued on Page 10)

TriCare Unraveled

(Continued From Page 9)

the Congress might want to change, increase or decrease funding of various programs.

This has, over the years, caused CBO analysis of the Tricare system and possible increases or changes in enrollment fees, deductible, etc. The most recent of these studies was published in June of this year and can be found on the website, www.CBO.gov or www.cbo.gov/ftpdocs/102xx/doc10261/.

In making these analyses, the CBO gives options to the Congress and offers alternatives.

The budget committees of the Congress are free to ignore, modify or include any or all of the recommendations that the CBO offers, the CBO does not, however, as some internet stories have suggested, write, legislate or vote on any legislation. That is strictly the prerogative of our elected representatives.

In summary, rather than believe these mostly inaccurate and inflammatory internet stories regarding Tricare, you should use and keep abreast of activities that are outlined with the information that MOAA is putting out to the membership.

MOAA and its membership will achieve much more if we really understand what is going on and work with MOAA to influence our representatives now and in the future, but we have to do this in a non-partisan and effective manner armed with accurate information and not some internet speculations!

Maj Jim Cunningham (Ret)

President's Message

(Continued from Page 5)

speaker at the August meeting to be held at the Ft Sam Golf Course. As many of us Air Force folks know, General Habiger is a retired Four Star General and previous commander of the Strategic Air Command. He has continued to have a very successful career in the civilian world. We are excited about having him as our speaker, and I know he will deliver a very timely and interesting presentation. I just hope all of you can make it.

I conclude my remarks with a quote from an unknown source. "Success comes in cans, failure comes in cant's". Your chapter is a chapter that has leadership that says "We can" and we will continue to do our very best for you. Your mission which we hope you will readily accept is to help us get new members, to get advertising be it business associates or advertising for our Lariat and to attend our social functions that we try so very hard to make appealing to various factions of our membership. God Bless each of you and God Bless America.

LtCol Ed Marwin (Ret)

Top Ten

(Continued from Page 8)

against the advice, or over the protests, of his military advisers, from 1938 to 1944. Besides the decision to invade North Africa, there were more than a dozen strategic decisions for which the initiative apparently came from the president. A good example of this is his initiative to declare that unconditional surrender would be a central Allied war aim.

Rick Atkinson

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



Medical Minute

Beau Lines on Fingernails

Beau lines are grooves that run horizontally across the nail plate. They usually develop when nail plate growth, which begins in the nail matrix (located under the cuticle), is temporarily disrupted. This can occur with direct injury to the nail matrix, an inflammatory condition such as psoriasis; infection around the nail plate; repetitive picking at the nails or cuticles; or even a manicure. Systemic causes include nutritional deficiencies, illnesses accompanied by high fever, metabolic conditions, certain drugs, (especially chemotherapy agents) and diminished blood flow to the fingers (from Raynaud's phenomenon, for example).

Since nails grow slowly - about three millimeters per month for fingernails - a condition affecting the nail matrix won't register in the nail plate for weeks or months. You can estimate when the injury to the nail matrix took place by measuring the distance from the cuticle to the groove. Unless the matrix is injured, Beau's lines grow out with the nail and eventually disappear. Complete replacement of a fingernail takes about six months. You can't do much about Beau lines.

Adapted from an article in Harvard Women's Health Watch April 2009. Originally written by Dr. Celeste Robb-Nicholson.

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Benefits of Membership of MOAA and the local chapter

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

Referred by: _____

The Give Me 10! Campaign Options:

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

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

Membership Application

(Annual Membership)

Are you a member of MOAA National? _____



Military Officers Association of America Alamo Chapter

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

Name _____
(Print) Last First MI Spouse

Residence Address City State Zip

Rank/Grade Service Date of Birth

Home phone _____ Business phone _____

Civilian/Military Occupation _____

Firm/Unit _____ E-mail* _____

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

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

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

Would you be interested in being active in chapter volunteer activity? _____

Signature Date

CHARITABLE OUTREACH PROGRAM

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

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

Send applications to:

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

For questions please call (210) 228-9955 or e-mail: moaa-ac@sbcglobal.net

Also visit our chapter's website at www.alamomoaa.org

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

7-15-09



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Chapter Events Calendar

AUGUST

1 Volunteer Hours Due

4 Solitaire's Luncheon 11am Ft Sam Houston Golf Club

6 Staff Meeting 9am MOAA-AC Office

11 Healthcare Consumer Advisory Council Mtg 11:30am Sam Houston Club

14 Victory in Japan Day

19 Ft Sam Volunteer Advisory Council Mtg 9am

21-22 TCC 3rd Quarter Mtg Wichita Falls

23 Solitaire's Brunch 11am Randolph Parr O Club

25 Extravaganza Sam Houston Club (Ft Sam Newcomers Welcome)

27 Chapter Luncheon Ft Sam Golf Club

28 Draft Budget Due

SEPTEMBER

1 Volunteer Hours Due

1 Solitaire's Luncheon 11am Ft Sam Houston Golf Club

3 Staff Meeting 9am MOAA-AC Office

3 VA Volunteers Meeting 1pm

7 Labor Day – Fly the Flag!

11 Patriot Day – Fly the Flag!

11-13 Chapter Presidents Symposium

16 Ft Sam Volunteer Advisory Council Mtg 9am

18 POW/MIA Recognition Day

23 Chapter Picnic Oktoberfest 6pm Eberle Park Randolph AFB

27 Solitaire's Brunch 11am Randolph Parr O Club

29 Extravaganza Sam Houston Club (Ft Sam Newcomers Welcome)

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

Ongoing:

Cookie Angels delivering items to Warrior & Family Support Center

OCTOBER

1 Volunteer Hours Due

1 Staff Meeting 9am MOAA-AC Office

6 Solitaire's Luncheon 11am Ft Sam Houston Golf Club

7 Board Meeting 10am MOAA-AC Offices

13 Columbus Day - Fly the Flag!

17 Retiree Day Lackland 8am-2pm

21 Ft Sam Volunteer Advisory Council Mtg 9am

21-24 MOAA Annual Meeting San Diego

22 Annual Business Meeting Luncheon Lackland

25 Solitaire's Brunch 11am Randolph Parr O Club

27 Extravaganza Sam Houston Club (Ft Sam Newcomers Welcome)

31 Retiree Day Randolph AFB

NOVEMBER

2 Volunteer Hours Due

3 Solitaire's Luncheon 11am Ft Sam Houston Golf Club

3 Election Day - Fly the Flag!

5 Staff Meeting 9am MOAA-AC Office

7 Retiree Day Ft Sam Houston

10 Marine Corps Birthday

11 Veterans' Day - Fly the Flag!

18 Ft Sam Volunteer Advisory Council Mtg 9am

19 Chapter Luncheon Randolph Parr O Club

20 Annual Planning Meeting 1pm-4pm

22 Solitaire's Brunch 11 am Randolph Parr O Club

24 Extravaganza Sam Houston Club (Ft Sam Newcomers Welcome)

26 Thanksgiving - Fly the Flag!



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MISSION STATEMENT

TO BE A MAJOR SOURCE OF INFORMATION,
SUPPORT AND SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT FOR THE
MEMBERSHIP;

TO PROVIDE PROGRAMS AND SERVICES FOR
THE COMMON GOOD OF OUR MILITARY
COMMUNITY; AND TO BE A POWERFUL VOICE
SUPPORTING MOAA AT THE LOCAL, STATE AND
NATIONAL LEVELS.

P.O. Box 8037
San Antonio, TX 78208-0037
Phone: 210-228-9955

WE'RE ON THE WEB:

WWW.ALAMOMOAA.ORG

**Postmaster — please deliver by August 7th
Time Sensitive Material**

Thursday August 27, 2009

Chapter Luncheon Speaker: Gen Gene Habiger Four Star Retired General

**Ft Sam Golf Club
Social Hour beginning 11am
Lunch served at 11:45am**

Menu

**Chicken Ranchero
Roasted Red Potatoes, Vegetables
Salad, Rolls with butter**

Dessert: Apple Pie (Optional - \$3.00)

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

Price: \$11.00 without Dessert \$14.00 with Dessert

Enclosed: \$ _____

RSVP By Noon Tuesday, Aug 25th

Reservations not cancelled by noon Wednesday 27th will be billed.

Name _____

Guest: _____

Non member Officers welcome with reservations

Send reservation slip & check made payable to

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

RSVP by email moaa-ac@sbcglobal.net or phone (210) 228-9955.



.Directions to Ft Sam Houston Golf Club

The Golf Club is located at 1050 Harry Wurzbach. It is on the left hand side about a mile before the Harry Wurzbach gate of Ft Sam Houston. (210) 221-5863.