

MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA
ALAMO CHAPTER



THE



LARIAT

Volume 29, Number 9

“Five Star ★★★★★ Chapter”

September 2009



President's Message

The long hot summer continues. I'm not sure that is great news because I would certainly like to see the weather become a little cooler and rain come forth. However, in spite of tough weather conditions, your chapter continues to work very hard for the membership and do our best for chapter operations. I would like to say thank you to all of your leadership that makes that happen. If it were not for the involved leadership this would be a much more difficult task - in fact, impossible.

In that regard, we are beginning to

think ahead and creating our formal plan for the year 2010. We will be having our annual strategic planning meeting probably in November or December to provide the necessary plan. You can help. Let us know what we can do to make it a better chapter for you. Call me or any officers with your thoughts.

Along those lines, considerable thought will be given to our program offerings. We continue to be a bit dismayed about attendance at the programs running between 50-60 members out of our membership of around 1200. We have had some very good speakers, Deputy Commander of Lackland AFB, the Garrison Commander of Ft Sam Houston, Major General Fred Valenzuela who wowed everyone at the July luncheon at Lackland, and of course General Habiger who made a wonderful presentation at our August meeting. The thought continues to be expressed that perhaps we should do away with the social programs in the summer i.e. June, July and August. I have asked repeatedly throughout the months that I have been your President to provide input to me and have received some,

but not nearly as much as I would like to receive. Please give me some input on your thoughts. Do you think that we should curtail our summer social luncheon program or should we continue with them as we have in the past? Another consideration is that we will reinstate the second dinner dance in 2010. We have had some feedback on that and would like to return to having a Valentine's Day Dance along with the Christmas Dinner Dance.

In that regard, we have a great date for our Christmas Party; it is going to be 11 December 2009 at the Randolph Parr Officers Club. Please ask your friends, bring someone with you - they don't necessarily have to be a chapter member.

(Continued on Page 5)

Save The Date!

September 23 - Picnic
Theme: Oktoberfest
5pm RAFB Eberle Park

October 17
Retiree Day Lackland

October 22 - Luncheon
Ft Sam Golf Course

October 31
Retiree Day Randolph AFB

November 7
Retiree Day Ft Sam Houston

November 19 - Luncheon
RAFB Parr Officers Club

December 11 - Christmas Party
RAFB Parr Officers Club

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NOTICE

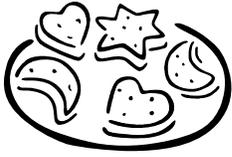
THE CHAPTER ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

will be held during the
monthly luncheon on

OCTOBER 22, 2009

**AT THE FT SAM GOLF
COURSE CLUBHOUSE**

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 Orlowski
Frank and Helga Parks
Jan Rund
Phyllis Smith
Susie Tolman
Dot Wise
Tom and Evelyn Woods

Volunteer Opportunities

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

TAPS

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

Katherine Wineman
Spouse of LTC Theodore Wineman
USA, (Ret)
8/1/2009

Louise Rollins Hill
Spouse of Col James Hill, USA
(Ret)
8/7/2009

LtCol Alfred Orlowski, USAF (Ret)
08/08/2009

Trixie Bellah
08/17/2009

Col James "JT" Bull USAF (Ret)
08/17/09

Patsy Swinarsky
Spouse of LtCol Jerry Swinarsky
USAF (Ret)
08/19/2009

Business Associate Program

The following Business Associate(s) have generously contributed to the MOAA Alamo Chapter enabling us to carry on our important mission. We encourage each of you to remember these important contributors in you business and your daily activities because we truly appreciate their support. If your business or organization would like to join these much appreciated sponsors as a Business Associate of the MOAA Alamo Chapter, please contact David Walker at (210) 228-9955. Thank you for your consideration.

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

Thanks for providing continuous back up service to the office computer



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

Don & Jan Kennady
Ralph & Ann Schmidt
Maj Len Mull
LtCol Ed LeFebvre
Marianne Wood
Barbara Steward



Exec VP's Corner

August has been a busy month as most Augusts go. We have been making preparations for our Oktoberfest Picnic at Randolph AFB's Eberle Park on September 23rd. We will have the usual Oompa Band and German Food as well as liquid refreshment. We would like to see a big crowd there this year as we always have fun. If you are one of our active duty members, we would really like for you to attend and bring a guest. The cost will be a modest \$20.00 per person. Hope to see many of you there.

August is also sort of a wind down period for all the legislative activity that has been going on at the Texas State Capital. I had the honor of being at the ceremonial signing of SB93 Hazelwood act enhancements and SB297 In-state tuition and fees for military families at UTSA. Not only the Governor and various dignitaries' were there, but importantly, Senator Leticia Van de Putte, Chair of the Senate Veterans Affairs & Military Installations was there as well as Representative Frank Corte, Jr. who is the Chair of the House Military Affairs Committee. Both of these individuals have been a driving force in getting military and veteran friendly legislation passed by the State and they are both San Antonians.



Jim Cunningham (2nd from left) with Leticia Van de Putte at ceremonial signing

Sadly this month we also lost Major Frank Parks, our Legislative Vice President. Frank had a long and distinguished career all the way from private to Major in the U.S. Army. He was a great friend, a community leader and great political advisor. He is survived by his beautiful wife Helga. Frank will be sorely missed by all in the Alamo Chapter!

So far as we can tell at this time, all the fight-

ing over health care reform at the national level is not going to affect Veterans benefits from the VA nor will it affect Tricare Standard, Prime or TFL. If you have been keeping up with the MOAA national legislative bulletins, President Obama has stated and committed that none of these will be affected. Keep tabs on this through the MOAA Healthcare blog that I mentioned last month.

This month, I will also be conducting the 3rd Quarterly Meeting of the Texas Council of Chapters in Wichita Falls. During this meeting, Chapters from across the State will be talking about the legislation that has just been passed, legislation that we need to see and legislative goals that are being taken on at the National level. We will also be forming a committee to investigate ways that Chapters that are affected can help the VA in its efforts to serve Veterans in rural or extreme rural situations. This is a problem particularly in the San Antonio districts, the Valley and in Lubbock areas.

(Continued on Page 9)

Better Rates! More Savings!

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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.

Credit for MOAA Life Membership Conversions

Did you know that converting to Life Membership in MOAA national gets our Chapter \$20?

MOAA chapter members already have signed up 2,300 new members during the 2009 campaign. However, chapters not only receive credit for recruiting new members, they also can earn credit and \$20 for each chapter member who converts his or her regular national membership to a life membership. These chapter members will receive an additional benefit - a 10 percent discount on their life membership. This initiative also applies if a national MOAA member joins a chapter and then converts his or her regular membership to a life membership.

To receive the discount, call MOAA's Member Service Center at (800) 234-MOAA (6622), and ask to have your regular membership converted to a life membership. You must identify yourself as a chapter member in order for your chapter to receive credit. Or call the chapter office and ask for a 2009 Life membership brochure. Fill it out, and take 10 percent off the price listed for your age when writing your check.

Reunion Notice

320th Bombardment Group
of Martin B-26 Marauder

El Tropicano Riverwalk Hotel
San Antonio
Sept 24-25-26, 2009

Contact Alex Brast (941) 639-8616
or email adbrast@embarqmail.com
Website: www.320thbg.org

Open to all 320th and 42nd Wing
members, EM and officers alike

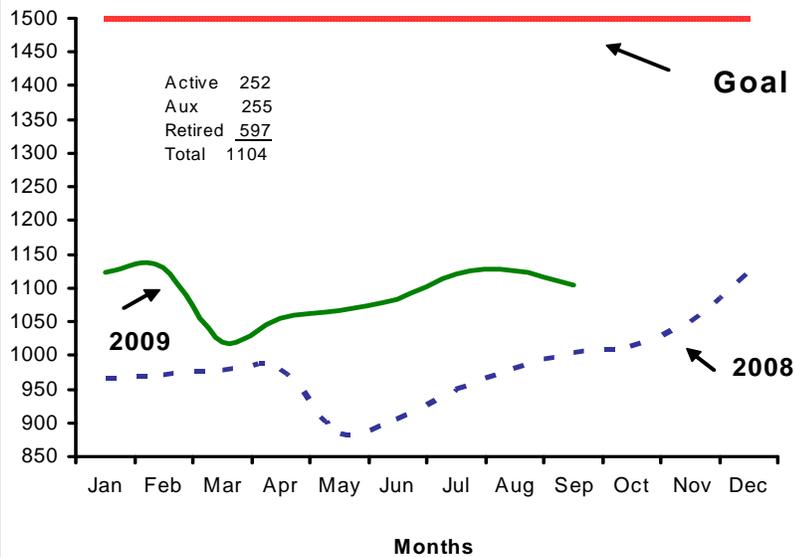
Welcome New Members!

Col Mary Garr USA
LTC Lisa Forsyth USA
LTC Gabriella Miller USA
LTC Theresa Walsh USA
LTC Cynthia Yost USA
Maj Eric Drynan USA
Maj Bonnie Garcia USA
Maj Higgins USA
Maj Clyde Hill USA
Maj Gary Hughes USA
Maj Robert Mason USA
Maj Homer McClearn USA
Maj Eric Poulsen USA

Maj Anita Roberts USA
Cpt Nicholas Baranello USA
Cpt Robert Campbell USAR
Cpt Jeremiah Catlin USA
Cpt Larry Coblenz USA
Cpt Brian Haney USA
Cpt Adrian Johnson USA
Cpt Brady Lanoue USA
Cpt Bryan Nowak USA
1Lt Matthew Doellman USA
1Lt Jennifer Leake USA
CW2 Freddie Bowsley USA
CW2 Jimmy Strand USA

Alamo Chapter Membership

As of: August 20, 2009



New AMC Website Offers Space-Available Travel Info

Air Mobility Command recently unveiled its first official, command-level AMC Travel website. People planning to travel the AMC military travel system can now access www.amc.af.mil/amctravel/index.asp for the latest in AMC travel information. The site, which officially went live July 24, offers prospective space-available travelers a wealth of information, including an updated AMC passenger terminal contact list (complete with phone, e-mail and Web links), and more than a dozen travel documents, example letters and brochures.

Source AFA Newsletter

President's Message

(Continued from Page 1)

We would like to show off our chapter to your friends! Be thinking about that as you prepare for the holiday season.

Also, please be reminded of our picnic on 23 Sept at Eberle Park on Randolph AFB. These are always fun and we'd like to encourage folks to put it on their calendar. They are fun, relaxing with good food, good music and reasonable in price.

Transitioning a bit – one of our important missions is in the Personal Affairs area. I am excited to say that we have a full compliment of outstanding leaders who work our Personal Affairs mission.

Heading up the team is Col David Padden who has a great background and great experience in this area from his professional career. Other members include Col Stuart Myers and LtCol Craig Erickson.

The bad news is that we have had a significant number of deaths recently;

please note in the Taps column those that have been called home. I would like to specifically mention Frank Parks. He was our VP Legislative Affairs and did a remarkable job over the years. I had known Frank a long time and it is a great void to have him leave our chapter.

The wonderful news is that Frank was all MOAA in his heart and Helga said he had suggested that any memorial donations made on his behalf should go to the MOAA scholarship program. Thanks to Helga for sharing Frank with us. We will miss him as a friend, as a colleague and as a great patriot.

There is another initiative we have been working very hard on recently and that is to generate income from non dues income sources. As you know it is difficult to keep our membership where it needs to be to support the budget requirements of the chapter. We are in the process of creating a Business Associates Program in which community businesses will be offered

an opportunity, for a price, to be recognized as supporters of our chapter and assist in supporting our vision and our mission going forward.

There will be more details about this in future issues of *The Lariat* as we formalize the program. We would appreciate knowing about any member who knows of a business that might like to have their business publicized in *The Lariat* or on our website to show their support for MOAA and the veterans that we service and support. Let us know and we will contact them.

Until next time and until perhaps cooler weather, I remain humbly your President and am honored to serve your chapter.

Please remember that "success is based on CANS, and failures are based on CAN'TS". We will continue to be a "can do" chapter.

God Bless each of you and God Bless America.

LtCol Ed Marvin (Ret)



Medical Minute

Heat Related Illnesses

With the intense heat we have had this summer, many are experiencing some degree of heat related illnesses. It results when you are outdoors too much or do not have some sort of cooling system where you live or work.

Heat related illnesses fall into three categories:

- 1) Heat edema: May appear mild with symptoms such as swelling of hands and feet, as the body temperatures attempt to retain salt. Heat Cramps: cramping of calves, thighs, back or rib cage resulting from water and salt depletion.
- 2) Heat Exhaustion: Symptoms include queasiness, nausea, headache, and possibly some loss of physical

coordination.

- 3) Heat Stroke: Dizziness, severe fatigue, impaired consciousness, seizures, respiratory and heart problems, and acute kidney failure.

The following will help ward off heat related illness:

- 1) Wear wide brimmed hats and light colored clothing.
- 2) Take regular breaks and drink plenty of fluids.
- 3) Avoid salt tablets. Instead use fluids and foods that contain a moderate amount of salt.
- 4) Use oil free sunscreens.
- 5) Don't drink alcoholic beverages including beer. Alcohol is a diuretic and disrupts the body water-salt ex-

change system.

- 6) Cool off gradually. Sudden exposure to a cold room or water causes the body to redirect heat inward.
- 7) Be aware of medications that can impair the body's adaptation to heat, such as antihistamines, diuretics, certain anti-depressants, and drugs used to treat Parkinson's disease.

Source: Adapted from University of Texas Life Sciences Health Letter.



August Legislative Update

On July 23rd, before leaving for August Congressional recess, the Senate passed its version of the FY2010 National Defense Authorization Act. The House had passed its version in June. The respective House and Senate versions contain a number of provisions that address MOAA goals. Some of these are:

- End the deduction of VA Dependency and Indemnity Compensation from military Survivor Benefit Plan annuities. (Senate only)
- Phase-in the extension of concurrent receipt of disability pay and retired pay to all medically retired service members regardless of years of service. (House only)
- Find other ways of cutting DoD health costs besides shifting costs to retirees. (Senate only)
- Include all service after 11 Sep 01 in determination of reduced eligibility age for receipt of reserve component retired pay. (Senate only)
- Provide 3.4% pay raise to active force on 1/1/10 (vs. DoD proposed 2.9%). (Both House and Senate)
- Increase armed forces strength—Army by 30K, USMC by 8.1K, Navy by 3.5K, USAF by 13.7K. (Senate only; House similar except 15K for Army in 2010, then 30K in 2011)
- Extend eligibility for TRICARE Standard to gray area retirees. (Both House and Senate)
- Require DoD to improve access to mental health care for family members of members of the National Guard and Reserve who are deployed overseas. (Senate only)

House and Senate leaders will be appointed to a conference committee to resolve more than a thousand differences between the House- and Senate-passed versions of the defense bill ,

including difficult issues on procurement, detainees and more. In the past these difficult negotiations have usually dragged into October or November or beyond. Hopefully, Congress will have an incentive to expedite defense bill negotiations this year in order to clear the legislative decks for action on national health reform. We will all need to support MOAA's efforts to cause key provisions to be retained in the final legislation.

Another matter of major interest to present and former members of the armed forces, their families and survivors, is how military health care, Medicare, and TRICARE for Life will be impacted by proposed national health care reform. President Obama called a small group of military-oriented reporters to the White House in early August to emphasize that none of the changes would diminish TRICARE or VA benefits for service families or retirees. Moreover, Rep. Waxman, Chairman of the House Commerce and Energy Committee announced that under the bill passed by his Committee, veterans would be exempt from the health reform legislation. However, even if such protection survives the legislative process, revisions to Medicare will still be of utmost importance to retirees age 65 and over for whom TRICARE for Life is a Medicare supplement. Such revisions could also affect those younger than 65, since TRICARE payment rates are tied to Medicare's.

With Congress in recess, legislation for health care reform is very much in a state of flux. There are four 1,000 page bills under consideration with three more expected to come. Senator Conrad (D. N. Dakota), a member of a key Senate committee on health care, announced on national TV on August 16, that there were insufficient votes in the Senate for a "public option" or for "end of life counseling." In addition he stated that while the Senate would

attempt to meet President Obama's goal of a bill by September 15, there could be no assurance such goal would be met. The Senate would take whatever time it takes "to get it right."

A couple of things MOAA members can be sure of. Congress is well aware that seniors are the most powerful voting block in America, and legislators aren't going to flagrantly disregard their interest. In addition MOAA will be working hard to protect members' interests.

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

VA reopens Health Care Enrollment: Under a new regulation effective June 15, VA will enroll Veterans whose income exceeds current means-tested thresholds by up to 10 percent. These Veterans were excluded from VA health care enrollment when income limits were imposed in 2003 on Veterans with no service-connected disabilities or other special eligibility for care. There is no income limit for Veterans with compensable service-connected disabilities or for Veterans being seen for their service-connected disabilities.

Veterans who have applied for VA health care but were rejected due to income at any point in 2009 will have their applications reconsidered under the new income threshold formula. Those who applied before 2009, but were rejected due to income, must reapply. VA will contact these Veterans through a direct-mail campaign, Veterans service organizations, and a national and regional marketing campaign.

Information about enrollment and an income and assets calculator are available at www.va.gov/healtheligibility or contact VA's Health Benefits Service Center at 1-877-222 VETS (1-877-222-8387).

Retiree Days

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

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

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

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

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

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

Maj Jim Cunningham (Ret)



HAPPY LABOR DAY!

Most of us view it as a day off work, picnics, and the last day the family can have a mini holiday before school starts. It just happens to be the beginning of the NFL and college football season. It marks the end of summer. But it hasn't always been so.

As the Industrial Revolution took hold of the nation, the average American in the late 1800's worked twelve hour days, seven days a week in order to make a basic living. Children were also working as they provided cheap labor to employers, and laws against child labor were not strictly enforced. With long hours, low wages and terrible working conditions American unions became more popular. They voiced worker demands for a better way of life. On Tuesday 5 September 1882, 10,000 workers marched from City Hall to Union Square in NYC. This was the first Labor Day parade. Participants took an unpaid day off to honor the workers of America as well as vocalize issues they had with employers.

The railroad workers were repeatedly getting their wages cut by 30% - 70%. They organized into small unions. Small boycotts resulted. On 21 June 1894 the ARU (American Railroad Union) voted to join the Pullman Union of Chicago. They successfully boycotted transcontinental lines going west of Chicago. George Pullman owned not only the rail cars but the whole city of Pullman, Ill. To keep his rail lines open he attached Pullman cars to U.S. mail cars. This created a back up of the postal service bringing the Federal government into the act. On 3 July 1894 President Grover Cleveland ordered 20,000 Federal troops to crack the strike and run the railways. Much rioting and bloodshed ensued. The boycott collapsed and it broke the back of the union. The strike brought

Solitaires



workers rights to the public eye. In 1894 Congress declared a day, the first Monday of September, as a holiday for workers - Labor Day. A day dedicated to honor the social and economic achievement of American workers. Since then most countries have set a day aside to honor their workers. Today Labor Day is often regarded as a day off work for parades, political speeches and picnics.

The Solitaires have committed their efforts to supporting Joyce Buie of the Red Ribbon Corps, Inc. to make red velvet ribbon loops. These will be affixed to the gravestones of veterans in Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery on Veteran's Day. They will meet several more times before November to tie loops. If you have some free time, they could use the extra help.

The next Solitaire meeting will be on Tuesday 1 September at the Fort Sam Golf Club. Robbye Hogg will describe her trip through Iran. The Sunday 27 September brunch will be at the Randolph O Club.

Labor Day information adapted from: History of Labor Day: U S Labor Department publication.

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 3 of 3

The following reprint from FPRI is the third 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

#8. The U.S. Army in WWII was among the greatest agents, perhaps the greatest agent, of social change in the country during the 20th century. This is ironic given the inherent conservatism of the institution. Our national evolution on core issues of racial and gender equality are very much shaped by WWII.

The U.S. Army was segregated in WWII and exclusionary. In 1939, fewer than 4,000 blacks served in the Army. By early 1944, that number exceeded 750,000, and the disparity between the avowed principles for which the nation fought and the stark, hypocritical reality of American life in the 1940s gave impetus and legitimacy to the civil rights movement. Many African-Americans endorsed what they called the "Double V" campaign: a righteous struggle for victory over both enemies abroad and racism at home. Severe restrictions on combat roles for black troops gradually eased; a group of fighter pilots known as the Tuskegee airmen demonstrated the inanity of those restrictions, including assertions that black pilots lacked the reflexes to be good fighter pilots. It's hard to imagine Barack Obama elected as president of the United States in 2008 without the accelerated social change of WWII.

The Army in WWII was also an overwhelmingly male institution, and exclusively male in senior leadership roles. Of 1,300 generals in the Army in July 1944, not one of them was a woman. (The first female Army general didn't come into being until 1970.) But the extraordinary

demand for military manpower meant that women were drawn into the national workplace in exceptional numbers; it's very hard to put that genie back in the bottle.

Moreover, the Army was a democratizing institution, even though it was and remains relentlessly hierarchical. Of 683 graduates from Princeton University's Class of '42, 84 percent were in uniform by 1945, and those serving as enlisted men included the valedictorian and salutatorian; 25 classmates would die during the war, including 19 killed in combat.

#9. The history of the U.S. Army in WWII is among the greatest stories of the 20th century. It ought to be taught and learned as a story, with character, plot, conflict, and denouement. John Updike wrote that WWII was the twentieth century's central myth, "a vast imagining of a primal time when good and evil contended for the planet, a tale of Troy whose angles are infinite and whose central figures never fail to amaze us with their size, their theatricality, their sweep."

Samuel Hynes, a fighter pilot in World War II who became a professor at Princeton, observed that the war "was an action in Aristotle's sense--it had a beginning, a middle, and an end." That should make for lively, coherent narrative, and narrative can be a wonderful teaching tool.

Two cautionary notes: first, as the British historian Sir Michael Howard warns, military history has "all too often been written to create and embellish a national myth, and to promote deeds of derring-do." The Second World War is ransacked to provide material for the glorification of our past." Triumphalism is not the point. Second, we've got to take care not to view the present and the future through the distorting lens of the past. One residue of WWII is a tendency to narrowly define power in military terms, and to define threats in terms of

traditional human enemies bent on doing ill. Climate change and our addiction to foreign oil have the potential to do more damage to American sovereignty and our way of life than anything al Qaeda can pull off.

#10. They died for you. We've talked about the WWII Army in as both an organism and a machine, an institution that grew stupendously, that demonstrated flexibility and adaptability. But we ought never to forget that at the core of this story is suffering. The U.S. military sustained almost 300,000 battle deaths during the war, and about 100,000 others from accidents, disease, and suicide. Many of those deaths were horrible, premature, and unspeakably sad. One, two, three, snap.

War is a clinic in mass killing, yet there's a miracle of singularity; each death is as unique as a snowflake or a fingerprint. The most critical lesson for every American is to understand, viscerally, that this vast host died one by one by one; to understand in your bones that they died for you.

I will close by offering a meditation on one death. Among those fighting in the ferocious battle in mid-December 1943 for San Pietro in central Italy, midway between Naples and Rome, was Captain Henry T. Waskow. Waskow was from Belton, Texas, born on a farm, and while he was a student at Trinity College he had joined the Texas National Guard.

The Texas Guard was federalized and became the 36th Infantry Division, and Henry Waskow eventually became commander of Company B, in the 143rd Infantry Regiment. He survived Salerno, but on December 14, 1943, while leading his company up Monte Sammucro, above San Pietro, he was killed by shellfire. His body lay on the mountain for several days until the company runner could get a mule from the valley below and bring Capt. Waskow down. (Continued on Page 10)

New Property Tax Exemption for Certain Disabled Veterans

With the passage of HB 3613 during the 81st Texas Legislature, certain veterans are entitled to an exemption from taxation of the total appraised value of the veteran's residence homestead.

This new law applies to a veteran who receives 100% disability compensation due to a service-connected disability and a rating of 100% disabled.

The law also provides adjustments to an exemption from ad valorem taxation of the residence homesteads of certain totally disabled veterans and to the amount of the exemption from ad valorem taxation to which a disabled veteran is entitled based on disability rating. The new adjustments are:

<i>Disability Rating of</i>		<i>Tax exemption of appraised value</i>
<i>at least: but less than</i>		
10%	30%	<i>First \$5,000</i>
30%	50%	<i>First \$7,500</i>
50%	70%	<i>First \$10,000</i>
70% & over		<i>First \$12,000</i>

The exemption applies to the property until it changes ownership or the person's qualification for the exemption changes. However, the chief appraiser may require a person allowed one of the exemptions in a prior year to file a new application to confirm the person's current qualification for the exemption by delivering a written notice that a new application is required accompanied by an appropriate application form to the person previously allowed the exemption.

The chief appraiser shall accept and approve or deny an application for a residence homestead exemption, including a disabled veteran residence homestead exemption, after the deadline for filing it has passed if it is filed not later than one year after the delinquency date for the taxes on the homestead.

Previous exemptions still apply. Disabled veterans, their surviving spouses and the spouses and minor children of a person who dies on active duty in the US Armed Forces are eligible for property tax exemptions on the appraised value of their property. Eligible veterans must have a minimum 10% service-connected disability rating by the US Department of Veterans Affairs or a branch of the Armed Forces Veterans with a rating of 10% or less are not entitled to a property tax exemption.

A veteran who has a disability rating of 10% or higher and who is 65 years or older is entitled to the maximum property tax exemption: A veteran whose disability consists of the loss of use of one or more limbs or total blindness in one or both eyes is entitled to the maximum exemption of \$12,000"

The surviving spouse of a person who dies on active duty is entitled to exemption of the first \$5,000 of the appraised value of the spouse's property. A surviving child of a person who dies on active duty is exempt on the first \$5,000 of appraised value of the property as long as the child is unmarried and under 21 years of age. The surviving spouse of a deceased veteran, who at the time of death had a compensable disability and was entitled to an exemption, is also entitled to that exemption of up to \$12,000 if the surviving spouse is unmarried.

Applications for the exemption must be completed between January 1 and April 30. To apply obtain an application from the local appraisal district office for your county. You must present a current VA award letter when applying for this exemption. Contact VA at 1-800-827-1000, the Texas Veterans Commission office or your local

veterans county service office for assistance in obtaining your current award letter. Contact information is available on the Texas Veterans Commission website at www.tvc.state.tx.us

Source: Texas Veterans Commission eVets newsletter



Exec VP's Corner

(Continued From Page 3)

Please plan on attending the Retiree Appreciation Days that the three military installations will be having in October and November.

Lackland/Brooks City Base will be having their activity on October 17th from 8 until 1400.

Randolph AFB will be having their activity from 8 until 1400 on October 31st.

Ft. Sam Houston will have their retiree day on November 7th. The featured speaker at this event will be Lt Col Shane Ostrom, the Deputy Director of Benefits for MOAA National. This activity will begin at 0800.

Maj Jim Cunningham (Ret)

Top Ten

(Continued from Page 8)

At the foot of the mountain was, by chance, Ernie Pyle, the great war correspondent. Here's part of Pyle's account of that scene:

"I was at the foot of the mule trail the night they brought Capt. Waskow's body down. The moon was nearly full at the time, and you could see far up the trail and even part way across the valley below. Soldiers made shadows in the moonlight as they walked. Dead men had been coming down the mountain all evening, lashed to the backs of mules. They came lying belly-down across the wooden packsaddles, their heads hanging down on the left side of the mule, their stiffened legs sticking awkwardly from the other side, bobbing up and down as the mule walked.

The Italian mule-skinners were afraid to walk beside the dead men, so Americans had to lead the mules down that night. Even the Americans were reluctant to unlash and lift off the bodies at the bottom, so an officer had to do it himself, and ask others to help.

The first one came early in the morning. They slid him down from the mule and stood him on his feet for a moment, while they got a new grip. In the half light he might have been merely a sick man standing there, leaning on the others. Then they laid him on the ground in the shadow of the low stone wall alongside the road. I don't know who that first one was. You feel small in the presence of dead men, and ashamed at being alive, and you don't ask silly questions.

We left him there beside the road, that first one, and we all went back into the cowshed and sat on water cans or lay in the straw, waiting for the next batch of mules.

Somebody said the dead soldier had been dead for four days, and then nobody said anything more about it. We talked soldier talk for an hour or more. The dead men lay all alone outside in the shadow of the low stone wall.

Then a soldier came into the cowshed and said there were some more bodies outside. We went out into the road. Four mules stood there, in the moonlight, in the road where the trail came down off the mountain. The soldiers who led them stood there waiting. 'This one is Captain Waskow,' one of them said quietly.

Two men unlash his body from the mule and lifted it off and laid it in the shadow beside the low stone wall. Other men took the other bodies off. Finally there were five lying end to end in a long row, alongside the road. You don't cover up dead men in the combat zone. They just lie there in the shadows until somebody else comes after them.

The unburdened mules moved off to their olive orchard. The men in the road seemed reluctant to leave. They stood around, and gradually one by one I could sense them moving close to Capt. Waskow's body. Not so much to look, I think, as to say something in finality to him, and to themselves. I stood close by and I could hear. One soldier came and looked down, and he said out loud, 'God damn it.' That's all he said, and then he walked away. Another one came. He said, 'God damn it to hell anyway.' He looked down for a few last moments, and then he turned and left.

Another man came; I think he was an officer. It was hard to tell officers from men in the half light, for all were bearded and grimy dirty. The man looked down into the dead captain's face, and then he spoke directly to him, as though he were alive. He said: 'I sure am sorry, old man.' Then a soldier came and stood beside the officer, and bent over, and he too spoke to his dead captain, not in a whisper but awfully tenderly, and he said: 'I sure am sorry, sir.'

Then the first man squatted down, and he reached down and took the dead hand, and he sat there for a full five minutes, holding the dead hand in his own and looking intently into the dead face, and he never uttered a sound all the time he sat there.

And finally he put the hand down, and then he reached up and gently straight-

ened the points of the captain's shirt collar, and then he sort of rearranged the tattered edges of his uniform around the wound. And then he got up and walked away down the road in the moonlight, all alone.

After that the rest of us went back into the cowshed, leaving the five dead men lying in a line, end to end, in the shadow of the low stone wall. We lay down on the straw in the cowshed, and pretty soon we were all asleep."

But Capt. Waskow had the last word. In a final letter to his parents, one of those just-in-case letters that soldiers sometimes write, he told them this: "I would like to have lived. But since God has willed otherwise, do not grieve too much, dear ones - I will have done my share to make this world a better place in which to live. Maybe, when the lights go on again all over the world, free people can be happy and gay again. If I failed as a leader, and I pray I didn't, it was not because I did not try." He added: "I loved you, with all my heart."
(Continued on Page

The first duty is to remember. We have an obligation to the Captain Waskows of World War II, and all our wars, to remember.

Rick Atkinson
Copyright Foreign Policy Research Institute (<http://www.fpri.org/>).

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.

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Benefits of Membership of MOAA and the local chapter

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

Referred by: _____

The Give Me 10! Campaign Options:

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

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

Membership Application

(Annual Membership)

Are you a member of MOAA National? _____



Military Officers Association of America Alamo Chapter

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

Name _____
(Print) Last First MI Spouse

Residence Address City State Zip

Rank/Grade Service Date of Birth

Home phone _____ Business phone _____

Civilian/Military Occupation _____

Firm/Unit _____ E-mail* _____

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

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

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

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

Signature Date

CHARITABLE OUTREACH PROGRAM

Please accept my tax-deductible donation of: \$ _____ to (check one)

Outreach Fund _____ As designated by the Alamo Chapter _____

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

Send applications to:

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

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

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

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

8-12-09



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Chapter Events Calendar

SEPTEMBER

1 *Volunteer Hours Due*

1 Solitaire's Luncheon 11am Ft Sam Golf Club

3 *Staff Meeting 9am MOAA-AC Office*

3 *VA Volunteers Meeting 1pm*

5 Town Hall Meeting Air Force Village II 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 PicNc Oktoberfest 5pm Eberle Park Randolph AFB

27 Solitaire's Brunch 11am Randolph Parr O Club

29 *Extravaganza Sam Houston Club (Ft Sam Newcomers Welcome)*

OCTOBER

1 *Volunteer Hours Due*

1 *Staff Meeting 9am MOAA-AC Office*

5-11 VA Hospital Creative Arts Festival

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

25 Solitaire's Brunch 11am Randolph Parr O Club

27 *Extravaganza Sam Houston Club (Ft Sam Newcomers Welcome)*

31 RetireeDay Randolph AFB

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

Ongoing:

Cookie Angels delivering items to Warrior & Family Support Center

NOVEMBER

TBD Annual Planning Meeting

2 *Volunteer Hours Due*

3 Solitaire's Luncheon 11am Ft Sam Golf Club

3 Election Day - Fly the Flag!

5 *Staff Meeting 9am MOAA-AC Office*

7 Retiree Day Ft Sam Houston

10 Marine Corps Birthday

11 Veterans' Day - Fly the Flag!

18 *Ft Sam Volunteer Advisory Council Mtg 9am*

19 Chapter Luncheon Randolph Parr O Club

22 Solitaire's Brunch 11 am Randolph Parr O Club

24 *Extravaganza Sam Houston Club (Ft Sam Newcomers Welcome)*

26 Thanksgiving - Fly the Flag!

DECEMBER

TBD Solitaire's Pot Luck Luncheon at Linda Gayer's House

TBD Decorate VA Hospital 9am

1 *Volunteer Hours Due*

3 *Staff Meeting 9am MOAA-AC Office*

7 Pearl Harbor Day

11 Christmas Dinner Dance Randolph Parr O Club

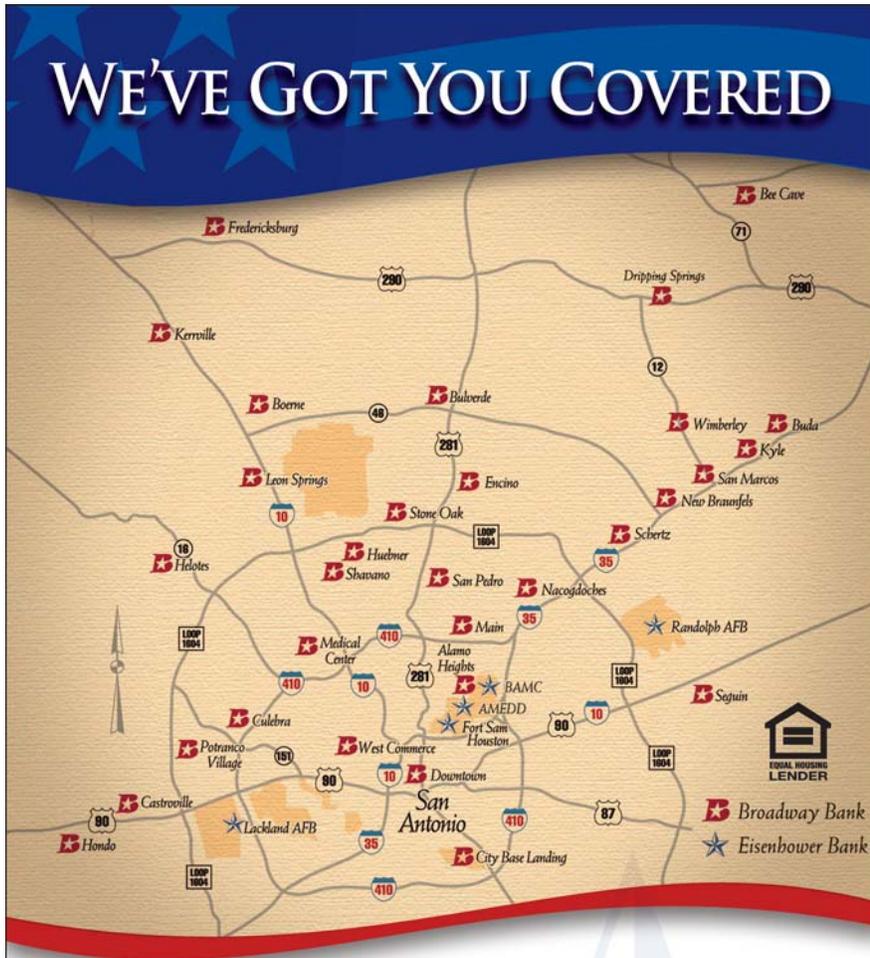
25 Christmas Day - Fly the Flag!

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Statement of Publication

The Lariat is the newsletter of the Military Officers Association of America—Alamo Chapter. It is published once each month to inform the membership of issues and activities of interest to all.

MOAA-AC is a non-profit organization within the state of Texas organized to represent the membership and to support the activities of the Texas Council of Chapters and MOAA National.

Advertising contained in the newsletter is not endorsed by the Chapter and does not represent any recommendation to the membership. Opinions expressed in articles contained herein are not necessarily those of the membership as a whole or the Chapter. Questions should be directed to the Editor, at the Chapter office.

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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.**

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WE'RE ON THE WEB:

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**Postmaster — please deliver by September 8th
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Wednesday September 23rd, 2009



Oktoberfest Chapter Picnic

**Eberle Park, Randolph AFB
Social Hour begins 5pm
Supper served at 6pm**

**Music by Rennie Guenther & Co
German style attire welcome! !**

Menu

**Pork Schnitzel, German Fried Potatoes
Red Cabbage, green beans, bread & butter
Beverages included (water, soda, iced tea, wine, beer)**

Price: \$20.00

Enclosed: \$ _____

**RSVP By 9am Monday, September 21st
Reservations not cancelled by noon 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 Eberle Park

Enter Randolph AFB at Main Gate (Pat Booker Road & FM 78)

Make a left at the second intersection onto New B Street East (Opposite Base Service Station).

Make a left at 5th Street East. Follow to end of street toward East Gate and FM 78.

Turn right just before East Gate onto Perimeter Road and follow approximately 2.3 miles.

Eberle Park will be on your left. Park on Perimeter Road.