



THE CAPE FEAR CHAPTER of MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

P O BOX 53621

FAYETTEVILLE, NC 28305

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President

COL (Ret) Juan I. Chavez, USA

1st VP

COL (Ret) Arturo Rodriguez, USA

2nd Vp

COL (Ret) George Blanc, USA

3rd VP

LTC (Ret) William J. Dadek, USA

Secretary

LTC (Ret) Doneal G. Gersh, USA

Treasurer

LTC (Ret) Edward R. Thomas II, USA

Personal Affairs Officer

1LT Andrea Candlish, USA

Auxiliary Liaison Officer

Carol Ivey

Chaplain

Ch (MAJ) Ron Webb

Legal Advisor

Joe Vonnegut

INFOGRAM - March 2014

EDITOR: LTC John W. Hazlett, US Army (Ret)

www.cfmoaa.org

PRESIDENT'S NOTES by Juan Chavez,

phone: (910)797-5419.

email: President@cfmoaa.org

As you know, we won the military COLA relief battle, thanks to a remarkable effort by MOAA from the local chapter level all the way to the top of the MOAA hierarchy. Thanks to all of you who took the time to contact our congressional representatives to express your concerns. Congress listened by passing a partial repeal of the COLA cuts for working-age retirees.

While the COLA relief victory was big, many more battles will need to be fought to minimize the proposed reduction in our national defense posture. The anticipated cuts in our defense budget were recently previewed by Secretary of Defense Hagel, and they are massive. The President's Fiscal 2015 Defense Budget will be formally presented to congress on the 3rd of March 2014.

In the ensuing months, we are going to see proposals to cap pay raises or even freezing pay for our active force; additional end-strength cuts, particularly in the Army; cuts in housing allowances for our service members; reductions to commissary benefit savings; means-test TRICARE fees, and establishment of TRICARE For Life/TRICARE Standard enrollment fees plus more.

As we have been forewarned time and time again during the past year, if there was ever a time to be strong, it is now. Our strength of course depends on our numbers so we must continue our recruiting efforts with a renewed sense of dedication. Moreover, we need to strongly encourage our chapter members **who are not** members of National MOAA or whose membership has lapsed, to join up.

While our chapter numbers are important at the local and state levels, our strength at the National MOAA level is essential to influence federal legislation. We all need to do our part by joining the fight to protect the earned benefits of military personnel and their families.

Our forthcoming general membership meeting/luncheon on the 28th of March at The Mash House Restaurant will present an excellent opportunity to sign up new members. Bring a prospective chapter member as your guest and we'll reward him or her with a free one year membership in our chapter, and we'll reimburse you upon request for the cost of their lunch.

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING/LUNCHEON – 28 MARCH 2014

A general membership meeting will be held at The Mash House Restaurant & Brewery on Sycamore Dairy Road, Fayetteville at 1130 hours, 28 March 2014.

Program includes a presentation by former Army medic, Iraqi war veteran, and member of the Golden Knights US Army Parachute Team, Rachel Medley. Ms. Medley is the founder of the Old Glory Legacy Foundation of Aberdeen, NC. a non-profit enterprise in support of our active duty service members and their families that our chapter has committed to support. To learn more about the foundation before the meeting, please visit her web site at OGLFoundation.org

Program also includes presentation of the Robert F. DeMeter Service Award to the 2013 recipient.

Please make reservations NLT 21 March 2014; we need a minimum of 75 attendees to meet contractual obligations. For more information and reservations see event flyer in this issue.

MEMBERSHIP - RECRUITING AND RETENTION

by Juan Chavez, President, phone (910) 797-5419; email President @cfmoaa.org

RECRUITING

We started the new recruiting year with 5 gains in January, a good start, but we need to average around 10 per month to achieve our recruiting goal for this year. We did a wee better in February with 6 gains. It's a pleasure to welcome our newest members:

LTC (Ret) Kenneth Heaney, USA
LTC (Ret) Jon A. Ring, USA
LTC (Ret) Kernist T. Stovall, USAF

CW2 (Ret) Marvin Williams, USA
Ms. Esther Acker, former USAR Officer
Mrs. Jane Fuqua, Auxiliary

As I mentioned in my opening notes, we have to reenergize our recruiting effort with a new sense of commitment. If we're going to put up a fight to protect our benefits we all need to kick it up a notch. Increasing our numbers is the only way we'll be able to make a difference.

We live in one of the largest recruiting markets in the country, so go out and recruit someone today! Once again, the **eligibility criteria** for membership are: **any commissioned or warrant officer – active duty, retired, former, Reserve or National Guard, in any of the seven uniformed services.**

RETENTION Effective 1 March we enter into the 30 day grace period for renewal of our 2014 membership dues. As of this writing, only 75% of our members have renewed thus far. How in the world are we going to increase our numbers if we cannot hold on to what we have? Come on folks, stop procrastinating and get your renewals in! If you haven't done so already, please mail in your renewals ASAP using the form on the back page of the *Infogram*. You can also renew online and pay by credit card by going to <http://www.moaa.org/OnlineChapterDuesPayment/>.

If you have any questions please call Secretary Don Gersh at (910) 484-4545.

STATE OF THE CHAPTER REPORT

Because the vast majority of the chapter was not present at our 24 January 2014 general membership meeting, many of those who were there and heard the report recommended that a version of it be published in the next *Infogram* or web site for the edification of the entire membership. Accordingly, the following is a very condensed version of the briefing. While it was not possible to include the slides, I hope you can deduce the gist of them.

STATE OF THE CHAPTER REPORT 2014

By Chapter President Juan Chavez

INTRODUCTION. Much has happened since I took over the helm in January 2013. We were faced



with a big problem, i.e., an aging and declining membership which was creating a steady, downward spiral in the life of the chapter. There was no interest in running for elective office, or volunteering for appointive positions, attendance at meetings was very poor, etc. My administration has taken a myriad of actions in an attempt to correct these problems and pump new life into the chapter. Therefore, I felt this report was necessary to let you know where we stand and where we are headed.

PREAMBLE. I start the report by displaying the preamble to our constitution and bylaws because this sets the tone and direction for everything that follows. One of the first actions taken was to revise the constitution and bylaws to address some of the problems plaguing the chapter. The document had not been updated for 10 years and was woefully out of date with current reality.

The same preamble you see appears in the bylaws of National MOAA and the NC Council of Chapters. Note: A copy of our constitution and bylaws is posted in the “Documents” section of our web site (www.cfmoaa.org) for the perusal of the general membership.

PURPOSES. As a refresher for all of us, the following two slides list the purposes of our chapter. What follows in this report should all support these purposes.

AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY. Our area of responsibility or “catchment” area encompasses a six county area (Bladen, Cumberland, Harnett, Hoke, Robeson & Sampson). The highest concentration of members, and potential members, exist in Cumberland County.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS. This is the current composition of the board of directors. The three directors indicated by an asterisk (*) (1st VP Art Rodriguez, 2nd VP George Blanc, & Secretary Don Gersh) were appointed well into the year because there were no candidates who cared to run for these elective positions during the last election of officers. I was very fortunate and appreciative that 3rd VP Bill Dadek and Treasurer Ed Thomas did run for reelection and stayed on.

SPECIAL STAFF. The special staff, with the exception of Infogram Editor John Hazlett, is all newly appointed.

MEMBERSHIP. This is how our membership stands today (234 Regular Members, 40 Auxiliary, & 2 Honorary). Recruiting new and younger members has been our primary focus. My goal is to double the size of the chapter in two years; our membership was at 171 regular members on Jan 13. We recruited 53 new members in 2013, 33 short of our annual goal of 86. Our rolls showed 103 auxiliary members in Jan 13, but after purging the roster we found out that over 60 of them had either died or moved out of the area. Since auxiliary members did not pay dues they were just carried on the rolls year after year. They started paying dues this year so at least we'll have a status verification check once a year.

MEMBERSHIP PROFILE. No surprises here, the majority of our members are Army.

Again, no surprise that the majority are retired, however, the pleasant surprise here is that we now have 16 active duty and 2 NG members and growing. This is a good sign because these are young officers who represent the future of MOAA.

MEETINGS – SPECIAL EVENTS. To improve the attendance at and quality of the general membership meetings, we changed the schedule to bi-monthly. Meeting monthly was just too much and provided little time for getting the word out, planning, and putting together a quality program. Attendance at our meetings last year almost doubled as a result of the change.

COMMUNICATIONS. In an effort to improve ways to communicate with our members and to move forwarded into the digital age, we brought on line a new, state-of-the art, web site, and a complementary medium, the E-Newsletter. Unfortunately, the only way of communicating with 45% of the membership is still by mail of the printed newsletter once per month. This problem will gradually resolve itself with time.



ROTC SUPPORT. Our primary philanthropic endeavor. We support 5 senior (university level) and 25 junior (high school level) ROTC units within our six-county catchment area.

ROTC SCHOLARSHIPS. We awarded six \$1,000 scholarships in 2013. We average about 7 per year and could go as high as 10, depending on qualified applicants. All scholarships are formally presented by an officer of the chapter.

ROTC AWARDS PROGRAM. We awarded four leadership awards to senior ROTC cadets and 14 to junior ROTC cadets in 2013. The awards to SROTC included a \$100 cash incentive. Like scholarships, these awards are formally presented by an officer of the chapter.

GOLD BAR PRESENTATIONS. Gold Bar packets, consisting of a set of gold bars and a free one-year membership in MOAA, are presented to all newly commissioned officers during their commissioning ceremonies. Sixty-four such packets were presented in 2013. Gold Bar packets are also presented to all newly commissioned NCNG officers graduating from their OCS Academy located here at Fort Bragg; 29 packets were presented to newly commissioned NCNG lieutenants in 2013. All Gold Bar packets are formally presented by an officer of the chapter.

CHARITABLE PROGRAMS. A total of \$3,125 in donations to various military support programs (USO, Red Cross, Fisher House, Chaplains' Funds, among others) were made in 2013. All of these donations are formally presented by an officer of the chapter.

FUND RAISING. Our primary fundraising event is our annual golf tournament. We netted \$14,000 in 2013, a record, in spite of the fact that only 20% of our members contributed. If 80% had contributed, we could have quadrupled the amount of funds raised and the good things the chapter could do for our community would be greatly enhanced.

FINANCIAL REPORT. Total funds available as of 31 December 2013 were \$30,875.25. This is our best financial posture in many years.

STATE OF THE CHAPTER. The state of our chapter is "Excellent" (grade A) for the reasons listed (Membership is increasing; Informational technologies are in place; and, Chapter is financially and administratively sound). I did not give ourselves a rating of "Outstanding" (grade A+) because we have not completely resolved all of our problems. We still need to recruit vigorously to meet our goal of doubling the size of the chapter by the end of 2014. We are going to need the help of every member. We need volunteers to run for elective office, appointive positions, and service in committees and special projects.

2014 GOALS. 1) Recruit 118 new members; 2) Persuade members to seek elective offices; 3) Encourage members to volunteer for appointive positions and service on projects and committees; 4) Increase ROTC support by \$2,000; 5) Increase charitable donations by \$1,800; and, 6) Create an environment wherein membership is enjoyable, meaningful, and self-satisfying.

CONCLUSION. We are headed in the right direction and I am confident that 2014 is going to be a banner year for our chapter.

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER by Ch (MAJ) Ron Webb, phone: (910) 635-8308, email: chaplain@cfmoaa.org

It was good to hear our Chapter President at one of the recent chapter meetings affirm a key organizational principle the notion of promoting a reverence for the American flag. We put this principle into practice by having the flag's pledge recited and its anthem played or sung at our meetings and banquets.

Our flag is an inspiring and powerful symbol of the freedoms of the United States. Francis Scott Key eloquently recognized this fact 200 years ago in 1814 when he wrote a poem entitled "The Defense of Fort McHenry." He witnessed the valiant Americans at that bulwark defending Baltimore against British warships. Moreover, he actually saw "the bombs bursting in air"... and noted that "our flag was still there." Later this poem was shaped into the patriotic song Key called the "Star Spangled Banner." The song was loved by many throughout the 19th and early 20th century, but it was not until the third of March in 1931 that President Herbert Hoover, acknowledging the opinion of men like John Phillip Sousa, declared "The Star Spangled Banner" to be the National Anthem of the United States of America.

From a person of faith's perspective the Star Spangled Banner is also meaningful. However, I think it gets overlooked, because the anthem is seldom sung in its all its verses. I find this one to be particularly affirming of our American faith heritage.

*O thus be it ever, when freemen shall stand
Between their loved home and the war's desolation.
Blest with vict'ry and peace, may the Heav'n rescued land
Praise the Power that hath made and preserved us a nation!
Then conquer we must, when our cause it is just,
And this be our motto: "In God is our trust."
And the star-spangled banner in triumph shall wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave!*

Pro Deo Et Patria

LEGISLATIVE BRIEF

FY 2015 defense budget will officially be released on March 4, but MOAA has learned it will contain a number of proposals to cut pay and benefits, and dramatically lower end strength. The budget is expected to include proposals to:

Consolidate TRICARE options for retirees and active duty family members, increase deductibles and co-pays, and establish new enrollment fees

Cap currently serving pay increases below private sector wage growth for the second consecutive year

Reduce commissary savings for uniformed service families

Increase servicemembers' out-of-pocket housing costs

Health care: A new health care threat emerges from soon-to-be released budget proposal.

Once again the administration will propose TRICARE copay and deductible increases, as well as establishing enrollment fees.

But for the first time the budget will attempt to consolidate TRICARE programs for retirees under 65 and active duty family members. We believe they intend to eliminate TRICARE Prime, the managed care option, leaving only a fee for service option (similar to existing TRICARE Standard and Extra) for retirees and families. We'll have more detail next week after the proposal is officially released.

Pay: For the second consecutive year the administration seeks a pay cap at 1 percent. This is 0.8 percent below private sector wage growth.

Past experience shows once Congress begins to cap pay below private sector pay growth, it continued until retention and readiness are undermined.

The troops' last three raises averaged less than 1.4 percent. The FY 2014 pay raise was the smallest in 50 years.

Congress worked over the past decade to fix a 13.5 percent pay gap with the civilian sector, but this proposal would extent a worrying trend in depressed pay increases.

Housing: Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) currently covers the average rent and utility costs for servicemembers and their families. The budget would trim the benefit back by shifting 5 percent of the costs onto servicemembers.

Commissaries: The proposal cuts the commissary subsidy from 30 percent to 10 percent in the continental U.S.; overseas and remote commissaries will not be affected.

On average, a family of four would lose nearly \$3,000 worth of commissary savings annually under this proposal.

When the two years of pay caps (FY 2014 and FY 2015) are combined with a 5 percent out-of-pocket housing cut proposal, and the commissary subsidy cuts, an Army Sergeant (E-5) with 10 years' service and a family of four will see an annual loss of over \$4,300. An Army Captain (O-3) would lose over \$5,000 annually when fully implemented.

End strength: The services have already accelerated a drawdown of 124,000 active and reserve component servicemembers by two years. The budget is expected to call for an additional 78,000-plus in cuts to end strength.

To achieve this new goal in an accelerated timeline, the services will be forced to use involuntary tools such as reductions in force (RIF) boards, selected early retirement boards, and reenlistment limitations.

MOAA's position: The Pentagon insists the proposed cuts are necessary to trim spending on pay and bene-

fits. DoD argues personnel costs have “risen 40 percent more than growth in the private sector” since 2001.

But this fails to acknowledge that much of increased personnel spending since 2001 was requested by the service chiefs to restore compensation that had been slashed throughout the 1990s and resulted in severe retention problems.

More importantly, the recent changes to pay and benefits have already started to bend the curve of personnel costs downward. Personnel growth has slowed to a two percent annual growth rate since 2010.

MOAA understands the difficult predicament the Pentagon now faces and we agree that ending the harmful effects of sequestration must be accomplished.

But the “quadruple whammy” of capping pay, increasing out-of-pocket housing expenses, slashing commissary benefits, and cutting health care benefits would be four giant steps towards repeating the unwise measures which led to retention and readiness problems in the past.

MOAA will have a full analysis of the FY 2015 budget submission in next week’s legislative update. We will also be hosting a Facebook Town Hall event on March 6 to answer your questions on the budget.

(Source: *MOAA Legislative Update*, 28 February 2014)

ALL – AUXILIARY LIAISON LETTER by Carol Ivey, phone: 910-868-3213, email: auxlo@cfmoaa.org

As more people are using the internet and phone options for their customer needs, walk-in service at 189 TRICARE Service Centers across the 50 states is ending as of April 1, 2014. The ending of walk-in customers does not affect health care or TRICARE For Life benefits. Get more information about these changes and sign up for TRICARE Service Center e-mail updates at www.tricare.mil/TSC. Get linked to all your online and toll free customer service options through the new “I want to” feature at www.tricare.mil.

LADIES OF MOAA CLUB NOTES by Janet Shipp, President, phone: 910-868-4998, email: shippahoyx8@gmail.com

I’m so proud of our new board ladies; they stepped in and did a terrific job in my absence, and on the first luncheon we’ve hosted. Over 55% of our membership enjoyed a very nice meal, and a talk from a very informative cardiologist.

But, we still need you to remember to attend. We have wonderful plans waiting! I won’t tell just anybody!

Wouldn’t you like to join us at Carrabba’s for lunch at 11:00 AM on Thursday, March 27? Please make sure you contact your “call lady” or a board member at least one week before the deadline.

One more thing...we need a dance chairman, please help.

CALENDAR

MARCH

03	Ladies of MOAA Board Meeting	Fort Bragg Club	1000
04	CFC Board of Directors Meeting	Fort Bragg Club	1100
26	Ladies of MOAA Luncheon	Carrabba’s	1100
28	CFC General Membership Meeting	The Mash House	1130

APRIL

07	Ladies of MOAA Board Meeting	Fort Bragg Club	1000
08	CFC Board of Directors Meeting	Fort Bragg Club	1100
24	Ladies of MOAA Luncheon	TBA	TBA

MAY

05	Ladies of MOAA Board Meeting	Fort Bragg Club	1000
06	CFC Board of Directors Meeting	Fort Bragg Club	1100
22	Ladies of MOAA Luncheon	TBA	TBA
29	CFC General Membership Meeting	TBA	TBA

**CAPE FEAR CHAPTER
MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA**

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING/LUNCHEON

The Mash House, 4150 Sycamore Dairy Rd.

1130 Hours, Friday March 28, 2014

COST: \$22.00 Per Person (Tax & Gratuity Included)

DRESS: Casual

Menu

Beef Tenderloin (w/red wine demi-glaze), Grilled Salmon (garnished with hollandaise sauce), Pasta Primavera (w/roasted vegetables),

SIDES: Rice Pilaf, Roasted Vegetables, and Salad Station

DESSERTS: Choice of Mini Cheesecake or Butterscotch Brownie (w/Coffee Ice Cream)

DRINKS: Pepsi Products, Iced Sweet or Unsweetened Tea, and Coffee

(No Host Bar)

RSVP NLT March 21, 2014

Send reservations and check (payable to CFC MOAA) to:

George Blanc, 3490 Thamesford Rd, Fayetteville, NC 28311

NAME _____

NAME OF GUEST(S) _____

NUMBER OF RESERVATIONS _____ **x \$22.00 =** _____

**THE CAPE FEAR CHAPTER
of
MILITARY OFFICERS
ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA
POST OFFICE BOX 53621
FAYETTEVILLE, NC 28305**



Non-Profit Org.
US POSTAGE
PAID
Permit No. 240
Fayetteville, NC

PLEASE ENROLL ME AS A MEMBER OF THE CAPE FEAR CHAPTER, MOAA

____ Initial Enrollment ____ Annual Renewal Date: _____

Category: Regular ____ (\$20) Auxiliary ____ (\$10)

NAME: _____ SPOUSE'S NAME: _____

RANK: ____ SERVICE: _____ Active Duty ____ Retired ____ Veteran ____

ADDRESS: _____ ZIP: _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____ TELEPHONE: _____

NATIONAL MOAA MEMBER? Yes ____ Membership # _____; No ____

I would like to receive my Infogram by: ____ Regular Mail ____ E-mail

Please mail with any payment due to:
Cape Fear Chapter, MOAA
PO Box 53621, Fayetteville, NC 28305

03/2014