



MAY 2020 INFOGRAM



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AN INFORMATIVE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS OF CAPE FEAR
CHAPTER (NC-01)

COVID-19 affects chapter's programs

by Don Gersh

To date, the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19) has taken the lives of more than a quarter of a million people world-wide since last November.

It not only affected commerce, education, recreation and our daily lives, COVID-19 has forced the cancellation of the chapter's scheduled programs.

The board of directors held its April and May meetings via Zoom®, a communications conferencing application.

Until Fort Bragg returns to some form of normalcy, President Ira Watkins and 2nd Vice President Rich Underwood cannot plan general membership meetings.

A decision about holding the annual ROTC Scholarship Golf Tournament will be made later this summer. Juan Chavez said it will depend on the state of the COVID-19 guidelines.

The May 8 ROTC Scholarship and general membership luncheon is canceled.

SHORT TAKES

- ♠ Treasurer Ralph Hinrichs reported results of the annual financial review. Art Rodriguez conducted it and said "Best set of records in a long time."
- ♠ Secretary Sara Ballard said a number of members are delinquent in paying their 2020 dues
- ♠ Facebook and Twitter accounts "up & running"



Storming the Hill 2020: Help Protect Your Military Health Care System

by Retired Air Force Lt. Gen. Dana T. Atkins,
MOAA President

How can we help?

It's a common question in times of uncertainty. It's even more common among MOAA members — officers with a desire to help, to serve, to contribute, whether they are in or out of uniform, and spouses who've always stepped up when the need arises.

But now, as we encourage our medical responders, and support our essential workers as best we can, we've been asked

to stay home. It would seem we've been sidelined. But that's not the case at all.

While MOAA's annual Storming the Hill event set for March was cleared from the calendar by the COVID-19 crisis, MOAA's staff has assembled a Virtual Storm on a critical issue that's slipped out of the headlines during this temporary normal — an urgent need to readdress congressionally mandated reforms to the Military Health System (MHS). You may be familiar with some of the news surrounding these reform efforts. The plan to cut 18,000 military medical billets was announced more than a year ago, and MOAA successfully lobbied Congress last year

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to direct a pause so DoD could conduct a detailed analysis on the impact these cuts would have on readiness and beneficiaries.

Earlier this year, not related to those cuts, DoD released plans to reduce or eliminate 48 military treatment facilities (MTFs), potentially affecting about 200,000 beneficiaries. All of this before the COVID-19 outbreak.

We don't believe this current pandemic should be the sole architect of our future medical capability, fully staffed and resourced for a repeat crisis that may or may not happen for 100 years. We do, however, believe we should capitalize on solutions and lessons learned through these current challenges and come out on the other side with an improved interoperability of our national health care system, of which DoD is one component.

At present, DoD has put MHS reforms on hold due to the crisis and that's appropriate given the increased demand for health care providers from DoD and others like the VA, USPHS, and HHS.

However, when the demand levels off and we come out of this pandemic, DoD is charged

with submitting their analysis as noted above, and continuing MHS reform per the earlier congressional mandate.

to leverage all of our national talents and resources to surge when conditions warrant.

So, how can you help?



Join MOAA's virtual storm by visiting www.moaa.org/moaastorms for details on contacting your legislators.

If you're not part of one of MOAA's local chapters, find one and help others in your area advocate for your community.

And that's the crux of the problem.

MOAA needs your help in telling Congress the MHS reform agenda they approved in the FY2017 NDAA needs more than a pause — it needs to be stopped and reevaluated through a comprehensive review of solutions and lessons learned this year.

This assessment must include the whole of government along with the national health care system focusing on what worked well during the crisis and what needs to be improved.

The end result must be a health care system that 1) is capable of supporting current requirements, and 2) is a scalable and coordinated capability able

Share MOAA's message on social media by reaching out to your legislators, local media members, and others, and using the hashtag #MOAASstorms to spread the word.

Keep yourself safe by following all health guidance and keep up with the latest COVID-19 news, updates, and resources at www.moaa.org/coronavirus.

Even apart, we are all in this together. And even from our homes, we will Never Stop Serving.





PRESIDENT'S REPORT

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May All of Your Days in This Month Be Awesome

May, the last month of spring, is a dazzling month filled with colorful blooming flowers that remind us of hope, mild temperatures to enjoy before the hotter days of summer and noteworthy days to celebrate. While the COVID-19 pandemic will most certainly impact how we celebrate what May has to offer, we cannot, however, allow the virus to dampen our enthusiasm, resolve and creativity to make the most of what May has to offer.



As you are striving to make the most out of the merry month of May, take the time to periodically visit the TRICARE Coronavirus Guidance Webpage <https://www.tricare.mil/coronavirus>. There is a lot of information on this webpage that is continually updated and can increase your sense of awareness and peace of mind regarding TRICARE benefits during this pandemic.

Call to Action

Advocacy is something to maintain awareness and excitement about during May. Normally, preparation and instructions would be provided regarding Sum-

mer Storm or addressing issues of concern within the military community with legislators during the summer months. At MOAA National the plan is to accomplish this virtually, and the strategy at the state level is forthcoming.

One continuing issue that each of us can take action on now is to ask your members of Congress to join the fight to halt billet reductions and end military treatment facility downsizing amid COVID-19 uncertainty

<http://takeaction.moaa.org/app/write-a-letter?0&engagementId=507024>.

Remember that both Robinson and Joel clinics are on the list for either closure or downsizing. If you have not done so, consider sending a letter to your congressmen to consider a temporary waiver of TRICARE mail order pharmacy copays during the COVID-19 emergency <http://takeaction.moaa.org/app/write-a-letter?1&engagementId=507428>.

Another reason to be excited about May and its splendor is that this is the month for the third most popular holiday

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in the world. You guessed it. Mother's Day.

Approximately one quarter of all the flowers purchased throughout the year are purchased on Mother's Day. This supports the adage, your mother is your first friend, your best friend, your forever friend. An incredibly happy Mother's Day to all our mothers.

Memorial Day is another special day in May. Efforts to combat the coronavirus will impact the ability for traditional ceremonies to honor those who gave all in the defense of freedom.

Nevertheless, nothing precludes each of us from setting aside time from within our individual confines to reflect upon those who gave the ultimate sacrifice, and the fam-

ilies who must live with the loss. We are also all individually called upon to participate in the **National Moment of Remembrance**. This is an annual event that asks Americans,



wherever they are at 3:00 p.m. local time on Memorial Day, to pause for one minute to remember those who have died in military service to the United States.

Before closing, let me mention these fun things about May. The entire month is National Good-Car Keeping Month,

and two fun days to celebrate are No Socks Day on May 8, and Dance Like a Chicken Day on May 14.

Like us on Facebook, follow us on Twitter or visit us on the web at <https://cfmoaa.org>.

Stay Healthy, Stay Connected, and remember- NEVER STOP SERVING.

Ira



Publisher - Ira Watkins • Editor - Don Gersh • Webmaster - Juan Chavez

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Chapter Website <http://www.cfmoaa.org/>

MOAA Website <http://www.cfmoaa.org/MOAA>
"Take Action" <http://www.cfmoaa.org/takeAction/>

Membership Open to active duty, former, retired, and National Guard and Reserve commissioned and warrant officers of the uniformed services or their surviving spouses.





EDITORIAL

RETIRED ARMY LT. COL. DON GERSH
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I apologize to everyone for:

- * the lateness of past *Infograms*
- * the lack of editorial content
- * fewer pages each issue
- * and today I add an apology to Chaplain Tim Atkinson for not including his column

It is due either to this computer or the desktop publishing program I am using.

I have “uninstalled” and “reinstalled” it several times each month, but to no avail. It or the computer lets me down constantly.

Up until three hours ago my work was successfully saved, or so I thought. And then, once too often, I was let down.

I do not know why, obviously.

So apologies to all!

This is the reason why I submitted my resignation to

President Ira Watkins late last summer.

At my age, I did not want to invest in a new computer. Again, I do not know if the laptop or program is making my life miserable.

Since no one has stepped up to take over, I will try to publish using Microsoft Word. I do not know what the June issue will look like, but it will certainly be different.

By the way, we still need a Surviving Spouse Liaison, Webmaster and E-News editor. We also have vacancies for Personal Affairs Officer, committee members, and volunteers for this year’s election committee.

Call or email President Watkins for information.

Again, sorry!

Don

Just a reminder,



There are still many members who have not paid their 2020 dues.

Please go online for the membership form.



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*...We are a powerful voice speaking for a strong
national defense, and representing
the interests of military officers and their families
at every stage of their career...*

visit our website at www.cfmoaa.org

Facebook and Twitter addresses:

<https://www.facebook.com/capefearchapter>

<https://twitter.com/capefearmoaa>

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

MAY

- 4 - CAPE FEAR CHAPTER BOARD OF DIRECTORS
MEETING, VIDEOCONFERENCE, 10 AM*
- 16 - ARMED FORCES DAY*
- 25 - MEMORIAL DAY*

JUNE

- 2 - CAPE FEAR CHAPTER BOARD OF DIRECTORS
MEETING, VIDEOCONFERENCE, 10 AM*
- 14 - FLAG DAY*
- 14 - ARMY'S 245TH BIRTHDAY*

JULY

- 4 - INDEPENDENCE DAY*
- 7 - CAPE FEAR CHAPTER BOARD OF DIRECTORS
MEETING, LOCATION TO BE DETERMINED, 10 AM*