



# Council Communiqué

MOAA Outstanding Newsletter 1997, 1998, 2001, 2003, 2005  
Runner-up Outstanding Newsletter 1999, 2000, 2002, 2004

Florida Council of Chapters, Military Officers Association of America

Issue No. 77

AUGUST 2006

## GIVE ME TEN - - IT'S ABOUT GROWING MEMBERSHIP

LtCol JOHN E. FELDMANN, USAF (Ret.), NW AVP

I had the privilege of attending the Pensacola Military Officers Association (PMOAA) board meeting June 20<sup>th</sup>. I left them with a copy of the FCOC Cruise application for 2007. Today it can be found on our WEB site at, <http://www.moaaf.org/>.

They were very interested in the membership progress made by the Mayport chapter over the past two years and the effort/approaches taken. Here are some of the particulars I took in notes at the convention presentation. They grew from 266 members at the end of 2003 to 452 members at December 31, 2005. How? First was to find and elect a dynamic membership chairman. He was supported by several others responsible for distinct efforts. They listed the primary keys to success being the establishment of a vision (plan) and team effort. They used the "Give me Ten" rewards to offer initial free memberships. They made personal visits to active, guard and Reserve commanders describing our efforts on their behalf and had a Powerpoint presentation available. They used the national member list (yes the one that was still out of date) and made telephone contacts with the younger members to ask them to join the local chapter. (Col. Lange of MOAA Hq. stated at the convention the national list should be current by the end of this month.) Mayport listed these as the most important active efforts.

Secondary keys to success included placing stories (publicity) with local media. I assume these were of their activities and possibly letters to the editor on legislative endeavours, participation with JROTC, etc. They said they made major WEB site enhancements, including placing a membership application therein. They wrote personal letters and sent postcards to potential members. I don't know whether they used franked or first class mail. When NWFMOA used 1st class they had some forwarded where folks had moved within the past year. They sent their newsletter to organizations of interest, including JROTC. Finally, they offered attractive and varied programs at their meetings. One example cited was a discussion of Space "A" travel.

Note the primary keys listed were directed action and the secondary ones more passive. PMOAA intends to contact Mayport for more details. You other leaders may also wish to do so. I received the impression the effort is ongoing, not a one shot campaign. Further they tracked success by source of membership. They also reported a good renewal rate after the initial membership offer.

I do not know the age distribution of the new members, but Mayport clearly targeted active and newly retired folks. A job well done and ongoing. National MOAA reported their new members are increasingly from active and newly retired folks.

My E-mail program failed to accept the latest communiqué, so this may be repetitive of content. Still it does bear looking at for your own membership drives.

### IMPORTANT DATES - -

- 22-23SEP Fall Board Meeting - - Tarpon Springs area.
- 01JAN07 Chapter/Club Roster Information Form and Membership (*as of 31DEC06*) Report to Secretary.
- 01JAN Chapter/Club Dues due to Council Treasurer (*Based on above Membership Report*).
- JAN-FEB Winter Presidents'/Council Board Meetings - - Jacksonville area.
- 01MAR Chapter/Club Dues *must be received* by Council Treasurer.
- 10-14MAY Convention 2007 hosted by the Northeast Chapter - - Carnival m/s *IMAGINATION* sailing out of Jacksonville.
- 01JUN Chapter/Club Levels of Excellence Awards submissions due at MOAA National Headquarters.

**CHAPTER PRESIDENTS** are *again* reminded to check the Blue Book and the FCOC Web Site - - and ensure that all Chapter Information is up to date. Send corrections to the FCOC Secretary.

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**PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS**

CAPT WILLIAM W. MONK, USN (Ret)

**FREE MONEY, ANYONE?**

It's not often an offer like this comes along. Free money for your Chapter's coffers. And it's so easy to qualify, too. There are two steps. First, sign up for National MOAA's GIVE ME TEN program, and second, recruit a new National member for your Chapter, or convince a current Chapter member to convert to life membership. That's all there is to it! And for your efforts, The National Headquarters will send you MONEY!!! Money you can use in a variety of ways - add to your Scholarship Fund, for instance - or, pay that new member's Chapter dues for the rest of the year. I'm sure that resourceful Chapters can find other productive uses for the money - but the first step is to sign up for the program, so DO IT NOW!

But you may well ask, HOW do I do it? It's easy - just call MOAA's Member Service Center (MSC) today at (800) 234-6622. They'll send you a kit that contains all of the materials and information you need to win over new members.

To inspire your chapter members to get out and recruit, there are a number of incentives. For every new paying member your chapter signs up between now and the end of this year, you'll receive \$10 (\$20 for each Life member) - plus a one-time \$100 bonus when your chapter recruits 10 new members. Chapters will continue to receive \$10 for every new member they recruit, even after they have recruited 10 members.

In addition, chapters will be broken out by size, and a \$1,000 prize will be given to the top chapter in each category. Individual recruiters also will have a chance to win \$1,000. Every time a recruiter signs up a new member, he or she will receive an entry into our sweepstakes with a chance to win \$1,000.

The more officers you recruit, the more chances you'll have to win. In addition, the new member's name associated with the winning recruiter will receive a prize - a life membership in national MOAA and \$500. Did I mention that it's a super good deal for the new member? Two years, - - count 'em, two - - for the price of one, just \$24.00, and that includes a subscription to the MILITARY OFFICER magazine and, for the younger recruits, TODAY'S OFFICER, a quarterly print and monthly online magazine.

One would think that, given the good deals for all concerned, chapters would be jumping at the chance for all that free money - but there are TWENTY-FOUR chapters who aren't in the program!

If you're one of them you can't pass up this opportunity - - call the MSC today and get on the road to FREE MONEY!

Please keep our Comrades in the Profession of Arms in your thoughts and prayers.



**Time's Running Out for Key MOAA Issues - -**

By Col KLYNE D. NOWLIN, USAF (RET)  
Legislative Affairs Chairman

If we are going to influence our members of Congress to include key MOAA initiatives in the Defense Authorization bill, now may be the last opportunity for us to contact our senators and representative during this fiscal year, since time and opportunity are running out. With the August recess in process, our members of Congress are away from the Capitol visiting their districts until after Labor Day. When they return, there will be less than a month left for Congress to come up with a final agreement on the defense bill if it expects to complete its actions before FY2006 comes to an end, September 30.

Both the House and Senate have finished their respective versions of the FY2007 Defense Authorization Bill. However, there are differences in the House and Senate versions that must be resolved in order to come up with the final (Continued on Page 5)

## MOAA HAPPENINGS

Col. Ron Buchert, USAF (Ret.)  
Member, MOAA Board of Directors

Below are some items that were discussed at the July 17, 18 MOAA Board of Directors (BOD) meetings.

### COUNCIL & CHAPTER AFFAIRS HIGHLIGHTS:

- The Council & Chapter Affairs Committee, upon which Lt.Col. Fred Edwards and I (as chair) serve, evaluated the 80 submissions for the 2005 Chapter Excellence Program. The results are still being checked but I can say that Florida chapters did quite well. The 4 and 5 Star chapters will be notified shortly.

- No changes to the Chapter Excellence program will be made for this year's submissions (due June 2007) but we're instituting some modifications to the CY 2007 evaluation. These include the requirement for a chapter Auxiliary Liaison Officer and some shifting of the weights for the Objective part of the program.

- The plans for the SE area symposium in Savannah were finalized. For the first time we will present "new guy" training on chapter leadership to new presidents and those attendees who are expected to become presidents. The symposium will be held at the beautiful Savannah Marriott and meals and lodging for attendees and spouses at the symposium will be paid by MOAA.

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETINGS HIGHLIGHTS:

- MOAA will begin an ambitious program to have a chapter in each Congressional district. At this time we have chapters in 281 districts.

- Two chapters were approved for affiliation - - one in greater Louisville, KY, and one in Poplar Bluff, MO, for a total of 410 chapters.

- MOAA President VADM Ryan mentioned that while we "dodged a bullet" in the FY 2007 DoD Authorization bills by avoiding any TRICARE fee or co-pay increases we can expect a tough time next year when Congressmen aren't up for re-election.

- The August issue of the Military Officers magazine will include a Pro and Con article on the proposed bill to promote the National Guard head to 4 star rank. The BOD declined to go on record for or against this controversial issue.

- Auxiliary Advisory Committee co-chair (and St. Petersburg Area Chapter member) Violet Smith and her committee have the new Auxiliary handbook in its final stages and expects to print it shortly.

- MOAA's membership, as of May 31, 2006, is 358,654, which is slightly lower than anticipated. While recruiting has been very good we are seeing a higher number of deaths of our WWII/Korean War members than we expected.

- The May Consumer Price Index was 2.9 percent compared to 2.7 percent at this time last year. Based upon the current inflation rate the expectation for the end of this year's COLA is approximately 4 percent, about the same as last year.

- MOAA is cancelling its cell phone service program because the company has failed to provide the promised service in a satisfactory manner.

### OTHER ITEMS:

- The Council and Chapter Affairs Committee and spouses enjoyed a fantastic experience attending the Evening Parade at the Marine Corps Barracks. The parade and concert made all of us proud to be members of our nation's military.

- My wife Shirley and I visited the American History Museum and among the many imaginative exhibits that we saw was the flag that flew over the Pentagon on 9/11. This is on display while the flag that inspired Francis Scott Key to write the Star Spangled Banner is repaired. If visiting this terrific museum is on your list you'll have to move fast because the museum will close for renovation for two years the day after Labor Day 2006.

## Property Tax Break for Personnel in Combat - -

Col. Ron Buchert, USAF (Ret.)  
Member, MOAA Board of Directors

In early 2004 the Duval County (Jacksonville) Commission passed a law that provides financial assistance to military personnel who are serving in combat and who own residences in Duval County. Shortly after this the Hillsborough County (Tampa) Commission passed a similar law. Eventually three or four other Florida counties passed similar laws. Although the various counties' criteria are slightly different the basic rules are that a person must have a Florida residence and be in combat for 45 days in order to be relieved from paying property taxes up to \$1500 during that calendar year.

As good a deal as this is it is I think that there are two things that chapters could do to make the program even better. The first is to contact your VSO and see if your county has an Active Combat Duty Grant program and if so you can publicize it. It isn't as well known as you would expect. This can be done in your newsletters, in calls to local Guard and Reserve units and to nearby military installations' Family Support Centers, and through your contacts with county veterans' councils and other veterans' groups. Chances are great that the county has a web site for this program so making this known will be your best method to explain the program. The second thing that chapters can do is if your county doesn't have this program you can contact your county commission and urge the members to climb aboard the band wagon. When the Hillsborough County Commission learned that Duval County had instituted this tax break Hillsborough County jumped on the band wagon quickly. Providing this benefit is a relatively low cost and highly visible way for a county to show support for the men and women who are risking their lives fighting the war on terrorism.

**PRESIDENTS - - PLEASE** at least seriously consider signing your Chapters up for the "GIVE ME TEN" Program. It's all about growing your membership - - and it may well be very profitable to your Chapters. Look what it did for the Mayport Chapter last year. See Page 1

## Let's Stop Pitting People Against Hardware

From "Crosshairs - Military Matters in Review" By Fred Edwards

Aug. 4, 2006 -- The administration, the Department of Defense and legislators who bow to the administration's edicts behave like the real war is between military hardware and the troops. Here's what happens. Start with a set amount of money and call it a defense budget. Slice it in two. Set one piece aside for military hardware, weapons, equipment. Earmark the other for the cost of troops. The thinking goes that you MUST have a certain amount of hardware and if you run out of money, you'll have to get it from personnel costs. Or as Rep. Rick Larsen, D-Wash., a member of the House Armed Services Committee so poetically said recently: DoD will have to choose "between weapons and warriors."

On the surface, it makes for a good argument because personnel costs are rising faster than hardware procurement and maintenance. And the argument gets better because Congress insists on including military retiree payments and medical funding in the same pot with active-duty money. And the retiree costs are skyrocketing. Here's why. It started with a retirement system called "Redux," whereby retirees would receive 40 percent of their base pay upon initial retirement, instead of the traditional 50 percent. The troops didn't buy Redux and started voting with their feet. At the request of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, in 1999 Congress reinstated a 20-year retirement plan based on 50 percent of the average of the highest three years of basic pay. The legislation also included service members who had entered after July 31, 1986, thus forcing DoD to plug retroactive retirement costs into its budgeting.

Then came Tricare for Life, which subsidizes medical costs for military retirees who are Medicare-eligible. Congress saw this as a retention measure because many retirees had been promised lifetime medical care upon retirement, but the law was changed June 7, 1956, making such care "space available." Then, as bases were closed by the Base Realignment and Closure process, medical care simply became "unavailable" for tens of thousands. Tricare for Life is one reason why military health care costs have jumped from \$19 billion in 2001 to between \$38 billion and \$42 billion (depending on who's figures you like) this year.

The Defense Department conveniently forgets that Public Law 106-398 established a fully funded Medicare Eligible Health Care Trust Fund, effective Oct. 1, 2002, for Tricare for Life. So the costs should not be part of DoD's defense budget. Although the trust fund theoretically protects older military retirees, it doesn't protect the younger ones. Consequently, their Tricare program has been under attack with a plan by the administration to impose draconian hikes in their costs. Next, until 2003, disabled military retirees who received disability payments from the Department of Veterans affairs saw their retirement pay cut by the amount of the disability award. This was just plain wrong because retired pay and disability payments are earned for two different reasons and no other class of retirees or disabled persons were being penalized. So the law was changed, and the net affect upon the Defense Department was an increase in their military retiree payment obligations.

Finally, because of the war in Iraq, recruitment and retention costs have spiraled upward through use of such measures as huge selective re-enlistment bonuses, some two-dozen types of special pays, and even \$1,000 bonuses to Army retirees who refer prospects to recruiters if the prospects become soldiers.

Now here's the problem. One percent of the population is fighting the war against the Islamic fascists, and they're doing it for the other 99 percent. The idea of pitting the personnel costs of that 1 percent against the costs of military weaponry and machinery is pure hogwash. And there is no reason to balance the hardware budget on the backs of military retirees. A lynchpin of recruiting and retention success is the service member's knowledge that

health care will be adequately subsidized after retirement. And that lynchpin will be yanked out if today's service members see that military retirees are being shortchanged.

The fix is simple. Pay our warriors what it takes to recruit and retain them, and make sure they see that retirement promises are kept. As for the honest-it's-true statements that some legislators give you about not being able to afford it, just remind them of this: Our defense budget at the height of this war represents less than 3.5 percent of the gross national product. In the PEACETIME years between 1940 and 2000, Defense spending averaged 5.7 percent of the GNP. The 99 percent who are not affected by the war can afford to pay for BOTH military hardware and the troops.

**NOTICE:** The content of "Crosshairs - Military Matters in Review," may be copied or retransmitted for information purposes, but may not be used for any commercial purpose without my written permission. Any copies and re-transmissions must credit the source as "Crosshairs - Military Matters in Review, by Fred Edwards." I retain all copyright and proprietary rights of any content copied or retransmitted. All copies and retransmissions must contain this notice. Fred Edwards is a military columnist and journalist. For more about Fred and archived Crosshairs columns, visit <http://www.frededwards.net>

**EDITORS NOTE:** Most readers will recognize LtCol Fred Edwards, USMC (Ret) as a Past President of FCOC, MOAA - - and as a member of MOAA's Board of Directors.

**Time's Running Out** (Continued from Page 2) - -

National Defense Authorization Act. Leaders will probably start negotiating to resolve their differences after Labor Day. It is especially important for you to contact your legislators now to ensure key MOAA initiatives, which we have been fighting for all year, are included in the FY2007 Defense Authorization Act. Otherwise, our efforts will be for nothing, and we will have to start all over again next year.

Listed below are MOAA alerts, posted on MOAA's Web site, <http://capwiz.com/moaa/home/> on important provisions for inclusion in the defense bill. Go to MOAA's Web site to send a suggested message to your senators and representatives on the following issues.

**Retain key Guard/Reserve benefit improvements** - - A provision that would provide TRICARE Standard coverage to all members of the Guard/Reserve and their families at premium levels is currently only available to members mobilized since 9-11. The Senate has a provision that would reduce the normal age-60 requirement by three months for each 90 days mobilized since 9/11. MOAA supports both House and Senate versions.

**Retain Senate TRICARE pharmacy provision** - - The House and Senate bills will both reduce mail-order pharmacy fees to zero in order to encourage beneficiaries to use the mail-order system, which is far less expensive for the Pentagon. However, only the Senate bill would bar the Defense Department from increasing TRICARE retail pharmacy copays. MOAA supports the Senate version.

**Retain House military pay raise** - - The House bill contains language for a 2.7% annual military pay raise while the Senate version of the bill would only increase the military basic pay by 2.2%. MOAA supports the House version.

**Retain Senate SBP fixes** - - The Senate contains language that would first end the deduction of the VA's Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC), from SBP benefits paid to survivors by DoD, in cases where the member's death is service connected and would accelerate the effective date of 30-year paid-up SBP from Oct. 1, 2008 to Oct. 1, 2006, providing relief to thousands of older retirees who have paid SBP premiums for more than 30 years. The House bill does not contain language for SBP fixes. MOAA supports the Senate version.

**Retain Senate concurrent receipt provision** - - The Senate version would provide full, immediate concurrent receipt for those retirees deemed "unemployable" by the VA. The House version is silent on this issue. MOAA supports the Senate version.

**Sign SBP Discharge Petition** - - The Senate has passed a bill ("See Retain Senate SBP fixes" above) including one of MOAA's top legislative goals - - ending the deduction of VA survivor benefits from SBP when the member's death is caused by military service. Now we need House action. Write your representative to sign Rep. Chet Edwards (D-TX) discharge petition.

**Chapter/Club Happenings** - -

♦ **Northwest Florida MOA, Inc.** - - Will have speakers from AFSOC (Aug), The Air Armament Center (Sept) and (maybe) the Fair Tax (Oct) as part of their upcoming programs. All should be interesting - - *How about your programs?*

♦ **MOA of Sarasota** - - Their July program was presented by Chairman of the Board Pat Cowan (Yes, a lady, who is, by the way, legally blind!) of Southeastern Guide Dogs, Inc. (With the dog "Pixie") re the history of their program "Paws for Patriots" - - which provides seeing eye dogs to veterans who are/were blinded/wounded during the "global war on terrorism." The program, which includes the "Gifted Canine Program, is accomplished without cost to the veteran. *Wonder if she would travel to your Chapter?*

♦ **Tampa Chapter, MOAA** - - Publishes a "Membership Roster" on an annual basis, including a supplement for their Military Officers' Wives Club. It helps them keep track of their friends. It includes both organization's By-laws, a section re Legislative Contacts, and appropriate advertising - - and they (probably - - at least they should) make a few bucks for their programs on it. *What does your Chapter do in this regard?*

♦ **Charlotte Harbor Chapter** - - Had MGEN James L. Dozier, USA (Ret) as their guest speaker in July. MGEN Dozier was kidnapped by the "Red Brigade" in December, 1981 - - and held hostage by the terrorists for 42 days. He has taken a great interest in the "War on Terror." Can anyone blame him? Sure it was an interesting and timely presentation. *How interesting/timely are your speakers?*

♦ **Kingdom of The Sun Chapter** - - Is pushing their 2006 "Fill The Bus" community support program - - for the umpteenth year. It is an enormously successful effort; resulting in excellent community relation for KOS. *What is your Chapter's major community support program? Is your community aware of it? How does it effect your Chapter's image in the community?*

**Kudos** - -

To the following - - and their *Editors* on their **2005 MOAA Communications Awards** as noted - -

- ♦ **The Retrospect** (Tampa - Winner, Cat I)
- ♦ **Sarasota Breeze** (2<sup>nd</sup> Runner-Up, Cat I)
- ♦ **Highlights** (Mayport - 2<sup>nd</sup> Runner-Up, Cat II)
- ♦ **Officers Call** (St. Pete - 2<sup>nd</sup> Runner-Up)
- ♦ **Advisor** ((Suncoast Ch - 1<sup>st</sup> Runner-Up, Electronic NL)
- ♦ **Venice Area Ch** (Web Site at [www.venicemoaa.com](http://www.venicemoaa.com))
- ♦ **Council Communiqué** (Winner, Council Print NL & 1<sup>st</sup> Runner-Up Council Electronic NL) - - *Thanks to Bill Monk.*



**FCOC 2007 CONVENTION  
10-14MAY2007**

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The **COUNCIL COMMUNIQUÉ** is the newsletter of the Florida Council of Chapters and is published bimonthly: February, April, June, August, October, and December with a special convention issue published in March. A current issue of the Council Communiqué can be found at the Florida Council of Chapters Web Site: <http://www.moaaf.org/>

**Council Communiqué**

**FLORIDA COUNCIL OF CHAPTERS**

MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

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**TO:**