



Wichita Chapter News



April 2023

Dear MOAA Members,

"Happy Easter" Hope the Easter Bunny was most generous to all of you and you have all recovered from your sugar overloads.

This was a great month for our chapter. At our last meeting we had an excellent presentation from Ms Gail Joyce from MOAA National on several topics dealing with surviving spouses. It added several things to my to do list. The meeting also resulted in gaining two new transfer members, welcome Greg and Meg DeMarco and Joni Lynn Spiser. In addition, the trees and flowers are beginning to bloom. Something great to go along with the new growth, is the Kansas House passage of HB2036. This bill Extend[s] Property Tax Exemptions on primary residence and autos for disabled veterans. The bill has been referred to the senate Committee on Assessment and Taxation. See the attachment on the KANSAS MILITARY AND VETERANS' LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES FOR 2023 SESSION for more information. I also had a good meeting with CPT Scot Mullis, PMS for WSU ROTC, and we have tentatively scheduled WSU ROTC to do the color guard and present a Unit Mission/Status briefing. Right now, WSU has 62 cadets. For the USD259 JROTC and Leadership Programs, they held their annual National Awards Ceremony on Thursday, 13 April, to recognize over 225 cadets who were identified as superior performers for academics, leadership, or both. It was a great celebration of achievement hosted by Heights HS. Our chapter presented 8 MOAA medals at this ceremony and provided medals to Dodge City HS, AFJROTC; Derby HS, AFJROTC; and WSU ROTC. The next and last big event for USD259 JROTC will be their summer camp, 4 thru 9 June. The camp will be here in Wichita at the National Guard Heartland Preparedness Center, 2808 North New York Street.

The last topic I need to discuss is our chapter leadership. We're coming up on the end of our meeting year, September thru May and it's time to elect our Executive Committee for next year. It would be an honor to serve as your president for another year if selected. Shellie Harmon, Michael Dillard, and Roy Yenchsky are also agreeable to serve another year. However, we have several vacant positions and currently filled positions requesting to be relieved. (See the attached list of Job Descriptions) We need folks to step up and fill these positions. They're not difficult and we all work together to get the work done. However, it is not a one or two person job. The positions are open to everyone, members and spouses. Please consider filling one of our positions, we really need the help.

In closing, our guest speaker this month is Joe Stumpe, editor of The Active Age newspaper. As always, your input is always welcome. Email all concerns to me at m2george55@gmail.com. Sincerely, Michael R. George, President

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Joe Stumpe Highlights our April 30 Business Meeting

Active Age Newspaper Editor, Joe Stumpe is our guest speaker for the April business meeting. He is an author and history buff whose work has appeared in the Wichita Eagle, New York Times, Huffington Post and many other publications across the country. His first book is titled "Wicked Wichita." There is a full buffet that day at the Rolling Hills Country Club that starts at 11 a.m. and costs \$22 per person. Please pay with a check or exact amount of cash for your meal/s. The meeting starts at noon. Please respond to President Mike George's RSVP which goes out about a week before the meeting and asks if you will attend, and how many guests you plan to bring. Hope to see you there.

The TROW Monthly Meeting is set for April 21 in Derby

The Retired Officers Wives Club will meet this Friday at the clubhouse at the Madison Garden Villas. It is located at 2418 E. Madison Ave. There are two entrances says President Sue Tanner. As you arrive you will want to take the turn by the mailboxes and the clubhouse is right across from the mailboxes. Attendees are encouraged to start arriving at 11 a.m. so that the luncheon can begin at 11:30.

The luncheon is being catered by Drury Lane in Derby. The menu will be chicken salad sandwiches with a cranberry walnut salad, scones and muffins. Dessert will be cupcakes. Cost of the meal is \$14. Callers have been reaching out for reservations. If you have not been called, please contact Sue Tanner at 316-259-4153, or Cindy Rodman at 316-634-9011. When paying for the luncheon, please have exact change, or a check, as the treasurer does not keep much change with her.

Sue says guests are very welcome, but we need to know they are coming so we have plenty of food and enough prizes for our planned activity. There will be a short presentation by Lt. Col. Mike George, MOAA Chapter President, that will give us more information about transitioning our group to be an active part of MOAA. Following the presentation, we will be playing bingo says Sue. Please join TROW for a fun afternoon where everyone should walk away with a prize. If you are not a member of TROW yet, please contact Jeri Shellner at 316-655-1935 for more information.

Surviving Spouse Information *by Roy Yenchsky*

Those of you that had the opportunity to attend the March Brunch Meeting had a real treat with Gail Joyce as our guest speaker. She had a meaningful and heartfelt presentation on being a Surviving Spouse. I will definitely stay in touch with her in order to bring you current information.

I recently participated in the Virtual Surviving Spouse Chapter meeting and would like to share some information that came out of that meeting.

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Here are four topics of legislative action that the Surviving Spouse Council is seeking your advocacy on:

- Support for the National Cemetery Bill, HR 1413. It is no surprise that Arlington National Cemetery is running out of room. This bill proposes action now vs. waiting until Arlington has run out of room and it becomes a crisis.
- Caring for Survivors DIC Improvement Bill, HR 1083/SR 104. This bill proposes restoring DIC back to 55%. Over the past 10 years DIC has been allowed to be reduced to the present level of 43%.
- Love Lives on Act. This bill proposes revamping re-marriage rules. It proposes that if a surviving spouse chooses to remarry they would be able to retain SBP, DIC, commissary, and TriCare.
- DFAS Recoupment Act. This bill does not have a defined goal but it addresses the procedure DFAS uses to recoup owed funds. The current policy is “we want it all, and right now”. The Surviving Spouse Council is not sure how this should be done, but there has to be a better way!

If you would like to sit in on the Virtual Surviving Spouse Chapter meetings, there is no fee for joining. They meet once a month for an hour. The next meeting is 18 April at 4:00 PM. To join the chapter go ssacouncil@MOAA.org or email suzanne@MOAA.org.

Remember: “Inaction breeds doubt and fear. Action breeds confidence, courage, and peace of mind.”

KANSAS MILITARY AND VETERANS’ LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES FOR 2023 SESSION

1. Extend Property Tax Exemptions on primary residence and autos for disabled veterans [HB2036 passed House 123-1.] *What it could mean - 30% disabled veteran getting a 60% exemption and 70% disabled and above or over 65 getting a 100%.*
2. Support full KCVA Office budget request [House Substitute for SB42 pages 109-113 are Appropriations for KCVA Office. Bill passed house 103-21.]
3. Provide sales tax exemption for veterans rated 100% disabled for purchases up to \$25K [SB58 remains in committee]
4. Exempt currently serving military pay from Kansas Income Tax [HB2011 remains in committee]
5. Provide family caregivers of disabled veterans a tax credit [HB2204—hearing not yet scheduled.]
6. Design planned northeast Kansas skilled nursing facility for expansion beyond 72 beds [Awaiting VA grant funds; KCVA Office land transfer for future site in HB2378 passed the House 123-1 and bill remains in Senate Committee on Federal and State Affairs]
7. Expand veterans treatment courts, especially in rural regions [Chief Justice Luckert validated this need]
8. Permit permanent hunting and fishing licenses for disabled veterans [House passed HB2039 120-2 and Senate passed amended version 39-1. House non concurred with Senate amendments. Conference committee conferees appointed by House. Awaiting appointment of Senate conferees.]

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Chapter Executive Committee Positions to be filled for 2024

Vice President for Membership (Currently Vacant – Tasks being done by the President)

- Oversee the efforts to retain existing members and recruit new ones
- Oversee the committee's efforts to establish goals, plan and carry out membership-solicitation drives, and follow up on leads concerning potential members
- Submit a written description of the chapter's recruiting/retention level of effort and results to the president annually for inclusion in the chapter's Levels of Excellence award submission
- Report pertinent membership information to national MOAA (deceased members, changed contact information, etcetera) in a timely manner
- Report new members to national MOAA via the MOAA Web Base
- Aid new members with the national/chapter membership process as needed
- Assume the duties of the president when they are unavailable

Vice President for Programs (Currently filled by Paul Inman – He would like to be relieved)

- Oversee efforts to plan and execute a program of activities in consonance with the purposes of the chapter and the desires of the membership
- Develop programs, schedules, dates, locations, menus, etcetera for chapter meetings
- Coordinate audio/visual requirements to suit each program's requirements
- Plan and/or coordinate other activities as needed
- Submit monthly meeting announcements to the local media and chapter newsletter

Secretary (Currently filled by Earl Shellner – He would like to be relieved)

- Provide timely written notification of all meetings of the chapter and of the Executive Committee and shall maintain a record of all proceedings
- Publish a newsletter or oversee the publication by the newsletter editor, prior to monthly, general membership meetings
- Maintain membership records

Webmaster (Currently filled by Walt Nelson – He would like an assistant)

- Maintain the chapter website
 - Information about the chapter
 - Chapter activities
 - Provide to other websites the Executive Committee deems appropriate

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Derby AFROTC Students Stay Active During March

Eighteen Derby Cadets marched in the Wichita State University Parade March 18th, and earlier in the month volunteered at the Kansas State 5A and 6A Boys and Girls State Bowling Tournament. At the tournament, the cadets helped set up chairs the first day and disassembled them on the last day. The Color Guard presented the colors before each day of competition.

Col. Michael Dillard, Senior Director for the Derby AFJROTC said 18 members of the Derby Saber and Rifle Team welcomed the Department of Defense Education Assistance (DODEA) to Derby North Middle School. The Drill Team also performed two drill routines. Cadets also served as volunteers at Park Hill and El Paso Elementary Schools in Derby during community activities at those schools. The Derby Color Guard finished their month by Posting and Retiring the Colors at the Wichita Chapter of MOAA's March business meeting.