



Wichita Chapter News

MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA



December 2022

Dear MOAA Members,

I hope you all had a wonderful Thanksgiving and are planning to attend our December social brunch with Christmas music and silent auction on Sunday, 18 December. Our Christmas music will be provided by the Derby HS Madrigals. Since Christmas falls on the fourth Sunday in December, Rolling Hills will be serving their full brunch with breakfast and lunch entrees, not to mention all their great desserts. It should be a fabulous meal.

Before we settle into our Christmas reverie, I just want to reflect on three significant military events that helped shape our country and provided a look at the heroic level of effort our military is prepared to go to, to achieve our military and political goals. These three events or battles, all fought during the Christmas season were the battles of Trenton and Princeton in 1776, the Battle of the Bulge in 1944 and finally the Linebacker II aerial bombardment campaign against North Vietnam in 1972.

The first, is the Battles of Trenton and Princeton, Christmas 1776, which kept the emerging American Continental Army and more significantly the evolving American Revolution alive. It is forever memorialized by the painting of Washington Crossing the Delaware River by Emanuel Gottlieb Leutze. The victories Gen. Washington was able to achieve in these battles reinforced the idea with the Colonial Army and the citizenry that the revolution was winnable. This was truly the beginning of the future success of the Colonial Army, our independence, and the validation of our republic.

The second event is the Battle of the Bulge in Northern France, December 1944. Here a greatly outnumbered and outgunned Allied force fought a tremendous defensive battle that ended Germany's offensive attempts to win in Europe. From the Battle of the Bulge onward, Germany was on the defensive until finally overrun and defeated in May of 1945. The battle showed the world that when faced with nearly insurmountable odds and brutal weather conditions the US Army could fight and win. In addition, according to several historians, the victory in this battle helped end the war more quickly with far fewer casualties. It also helped cement the US as a preeminent world power.

The final event is the Linebacker II bombing campaign against North Vietnam, Christmas 1972. Many of us can remember or may have taken part in the actions included in this campaign. I for one was not in the military yet; however, during the late 1970's I was trained by and flew with a great many aircrew members who were there. The campaign lasted for an eleven-day period from 18-29 December. During that time the Air Force, Navy, and Marines flew hundreds of airstrikes designed to destroy North Vietnam's ability to wage war against South Vietnam. The airstrikes struck both strategic targets in the north and tactical targets in support of Army ground operations in the south. The

campaign came with a significant cost in men and aircraft. However, in retrospect, this campaign forced the North Vietnamese back to the negotiating table and ultimately to end of US involvement in the Vietnam War.

In my opinion, these three events symbolize our military's ability to achieve incredibly difficult objectives. But more importantly, they show the tremendous level of sacrifice our military is willing to make for those achievements. So, during this Christmas season please join me in a salute and a prayer for those men and women who made those sacrifices in the past and for those ready and willing to do it again when the time comes. One estimate I've read says the US has about 200,000 troops currently deployed, many in Europe due to the hostilities in the Ukraine.

Finally, I would be remiss if I didn't comment on our last month's guest presenter. Tony Mattivi, former prosecutor in the US Attorney's Office in Topeka, gave an amazing presentation on what goes into the investigation and prosecution of homegrown, would-be terrorists. He also mentioned that this was only a portion of the high-profile prosecutions he has been a part of. In addition, He was involved in prosecuting some of the war crimes committed by the Saddam Hussein government. Mattivi will return to Wichita to speak at our business meeting on 28 May.

In closing, I hope that as we approach Christmas and New Year's, we all can be thankful for the year gone by and ready to enjoy what is to come. Have a very Merry Christmas and a Blessed, Joyous New Year.

As always, your input is always welcome. Email all concerns to me m2george55@gmail.com. Also, please save **the dates for upcoming MOAA Meetings:** 29 Jan, 26 Feb, 26 Mar, 30 Apr, and 28 May 2023.

Sincerely,
Michael R. George, Lt.Col., USAF (Ret)
Chapter President

Derby High School Madrigals Perform December 18

The Derby High School Madrigals will perform at our December business meeting. The select choral ensemble of 30 singers regularly receive high ratings at local and state competition. They enjoy singing for school concerts and community groups in the greater Wichita area. The group performs choral music from all genres including pop music at the annual POPs Concert in the spring. The group is led by Tyler Morris, Vocal Music Teacher at Derby High School

TROW Luncheon Features Naughty Santa Ornament Exchange

TROW will hold their monthly luncheon at the Candle Club, 6135 E. 13th St., on Friday December 16. According to Sue Tanner, TROW President, the meeting will feature a Naughty Santa ornament exchange. Sue said every attendee is encouraged to bring an ornament that will be part of the exchange. The ornament should be new. Menu for the luncheon is a choice of meatballs and spaghetti, or chicken Fettucine Alfredo with

vegetables and rolls, assorted cookies and cheesecake bites. Sue encourages everyone to arrive between 11 and 11:15 a.m., so that members/guests can visit and be ready to sit down at 11:30 to begin the luncheon. The cost of the meal is \$23.50. Any TROW members who have questions should call Sue at 316-259-4153, or Cindy Rodman at 316-734-9011.

Derby High School AFJROTC Provides Community Support

Students in the AFROTC program at Derby High School participated in a number of civic activities during November and December, according to Col. Michael Dillard, who directs the AFJROTC program at the school. There were 29 cadets who marched in the Wichita Veterans Day Parade. Four cadets volunteered as ushers for the Stone Creek Elementary Veterans Concert. Another 24 cadets participated in the Derby Community Foundation Veterans Day Celebration. The school's Color Guard presented the colors and were complimented by the Mayor of Derby for their efforts.

The Derby AFROTC also helped with the Operation Holiday Food Drive and nine Cadets ushered and served hot chocolate to families at the Stone Creek Elementary Schools photos with Santa. During December the School Drill Team went to Lee's Summit High School in Missouri to participate in the 13th annual Titans Drill Meet. Thirteen schools competed in the meet. Derby took 1st place in the New Cadet competition; 1st place in the Armed Color Guard category, and the school placed second overall in the Meet. The School's Saber Team welcomed Kansas Teachers of the Year to Derby High with the teachers walking under the Saber Arch.

New Health and Welfare Benefits for Veterans

The PACT Act (Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics) has expanded and extends eligibility for VA health care for Veterans with toxic exposures. It covers veterans of the Vietnam Conflict, Gulf War, and post 9/11 era. The law adds more than 20 new presumptive conditions for burn pits and other toxic exposures, along with more presumptive exposure locations for Agent Orange and radiation. More information can be obtained by searching: <https://www.va.gov/resources/the-pact-act-and-your-va-benefits/>. Veterans can also call 1-800-MYVA411.

New lifetime passes are available for military veterans and Gold Star Families to access public lands. The passes provide free entrance to national parks, wildlife refuges and other public lands. Any of the following documents can be used to qualify for this offer.

- Unexpired Department of Defense Identification Card (DD Form 2, DD Form 2765, or Next Generation USID replacement)
- Veteran Health Identification Card (VHIC)
- Veteran ID Card

- Veterans designation on a state-issued US driver's license or identification card.

Deadline for REAL ID Requirement Extended Until May 2025

(Gray News) - The Department of Homeland Security is delaying its REAL ID requirement for air travel another two years, the agency recently announced. The program, which was set to begin May 3, 2023, will not be enforced until May 7, 2025. DHS said this extension gives states more time to ensure residents have driver's licenses and identification cards that meet the security standards established by the REAL ID Act. Beginning May 7, 2025, federal agencies, including TSA, will not accept driver's licenses and identification cards that do not meet federal standards.

Two Chapter Members Help Support Operation Holiday

LTC Paul Inman and his wife Delores have spent a number of hours the past two months in support of Operation Holiday. The program helps a number of low income families with assistance during the holiday season. Last month the Inmans worked in support of the "Turkey Bingo" event at Northridge Friends Church by serving chili and soup during the event, then helping clean up afterwards. Twenty Bingo winners received either turkeys or gift certificates for groceries. The event was sponsored by the Benjamin Hills/Pleasant Valley Neighborhood Association Board, of which Paul is a member.

Some of the proceeds from the event were 75-pounds of winter clothing, two-dozen grocery bags of donated food, and \$380 cash. Paul drove a pickup truck load of food and clothing to the old Sears Store in Town East Mall where the Operation Holiday site is located. Since 1960, HumanKind Ministries has supported Operation Holiday by providing food, toys, clothing, gift cards, blankets, coats and other items through donations by area churches, corporate sponsors, and individuals.