



Wichita Chapter News

MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA



FEBRUARY 4, 2020

DEAR MOAA MEMBERS,

*HAPPY
Valentine's Day*

Hope all is well with you and yours. It's hard to believe we are already well into February and if Punxsutawney Phil the weather predicting groundhog is correct we are only a couple of weeks away from spring. In addition, by the time you get this, we should be well on our way into this year's "silly season" of politics. Conventional wisdom and historical examples suggest the season starts in the summer; however, with the impeachment of President Trump and the apparent confusion within the Democratic Party as shown in the Iowa Caucus, it appears the "silly season" is well underway. My hope is that with enough Valentine's chocolate, the effect of the season will not be too overwhelming. Having said that, our turn is yet to come. The Kansas Democratic Primary is 2 May and the Republican Primary is 4 August.

I want to thank everyone again for the great turnout at our last brunch for the presentation from COL (R) Jeri Graham, representing MOAA National. She gave us a clear insight into the goals and direction of National MOAA. MOAA is clearly continuing to advocate for increased pay and benefits for our active duty military; maintenance of healthcare benefits for military dependents and retirees; and the ultimate elimination of the SBP/DIC Offset (Widow's Tax). Specific examples of this are the military's 2.6% pay raise; the reduction of military medical personnel and facilities are on hold pending more justification; and the SBP/DIC Offset may be fully repealed in 2020. I also want to take the opportunity to welcome again and thank several local national members for joining us for brunch: RADM (Ret) & Mrs. James Maslowski, CAPT (Ret) Sharon Hamric, LTC & Mrs. Chad Gericke and Maj & Mrs. George Erwin. We hope to see them at our future activities. Speaking of future meetings, at our February Brunch we will have a presentation from the JROTC cadet staffs from Wichita JROTC and Leadership Programs and the Derby AFJROTC cadets. From all reports, these programs continue with significant successes and look forward to a bright future. I ask all of you to join us for brunch this month and hear from the outstanding cadets running these programs and who will soon be off to colleges and/or the work force.

I will conclude this month's newsletter by asking everyone to look at "MOAA's 6 Tips for Engaging Congress" included below and ask you to let our elected officials know your thoughts and concerns about our military and country. It's only through our involvement that we can make a difference.

AS ALWAYS, YOUR INPUT IS WELCOME. EMAIL ALL CONCERNS TO ME AT M2GEORGE55@GMAIL.COM. @LSO, PLEASE SAVE THE DATES FOR UPCOMING MO@@ MEETINGS: 17 Feb, 17 Mar, 14 Apr and, 19 May.

SINCERELY,
MICHAEL R. GEORGE, PRESIDENT

Chapter Luncheon and Business Meeting

Our chapter luncheon and business meeting will be Feb. 17, at the Rolling Hills Country Club. The buffet opens at 11 a.m., and the program starts at 12:30. Our keynote speakers will be several of the top JROTC students in Wichita and Derby. Col. Nadeen Abu-Sherbi of Southeast High School will lead the program, along with LTC. Callie Dilks and CSM Alexandra LaForge, both of South H.S. Each cadet will talk about their experiences in the JROTC. Please come out and join us for what promises to be an enlightening program.

TROW Luncheon Meeting

The TROW meeting will be Feb. 21, at Scotch and Sirloin, 5325 E. Kellogg. The luncheon begins at 11:30 a.m., and features a presentation by representatives from Passageways, Ltd. Passageways provides housing and services to veterans who are homeless, or near homeless. There is currently one house in West Wichita that can accommodate up to nine male veterans at a time. There is no cost to the veteran. They receive help to overcome the issues that brought them to a homeless lifestyle. When they are ready, they are moved to a completely furnished place of their own. Passageways works to help encourage veterans to meet personal and professional goals. They get help to navigate the systems that provide benefits, thereby helping eliminate the red tape they may encounter on their own.

JROTC Students Participate in a Wide Variety of Activities

About 40 cadets from Curtis, Hadley, Mead, and Wells Middle Schools joined with cadets from North High School and 26 Derby cadets to participate in the annual Wichita Martin Luther King Jr. parade and celebration. The Derby Color Guard also recently presented colors at a Wichita Thunder Hockey game, and 15 Derby cadets volunteered at the Wine tree Elementary School Science, Technology, Engineering and MATH (STEM) night. Other Derby activities included 14 JROTC members volunteering at the Derby Hills Elementary School Literacy night while 10 others participated at the Derby North Middle School Scholars Bowl Tournament. Five cadets participated in the MLK ceremony at McConnell AFB and, students also took part in a two-day Biomedical Informational Fair at McConnell. Also 29 cadets volunteered at the state-wide Robotics Tournament at Derby MS. Two Derby cadets were selected for the AFJROTC Pilot Scholarship Program (one primary and one alternate). And two Derby cadets received nominations to Service Academies (one for the Air Force Academy and one for the Merchant Marines).

MOAA's 6 Tips for Engaging Congress

By MOAA National Staff

Interested in helping MOAA accomplish its 2020 legislative mission? Here are five ways to get involved; if you have a specific interest or question about a legislative matter, contact MOAA's government relations team at legis@moaa.org.

1. Identify your congressional representatives. A quick Google search can usually tell you

who represents your congressional district, but if you aren't sure, reach out to MOAA staff directly. And if you're an active duty servicemember or spouse living outside the district you vote in, make sure to engage with your representatives at your home and in the district where you currently live.

2. Choose a specific issue. Identifying a targeted topic and outcome can help focus the conversation with your representative. It's even better if you can share your personal connection to the issue.

3. Call your representative's offices directly. MOAA provides a direct number to the Capitol Switchboard, which will connect you directly to the office of your members of Congress.

4. Use the MOAA Take Action Center. MOAA provides email and letter templates for engaging on timely issues of importance to our members, as well as a system to submit them directly to your representatives. Visit takeaction.moaa.org.

5. Start a social media campaign. Engage with your representatives on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and other social media platforms, and encourage your friends and family members to do the same. The greater the number of comments on an issue, the more likely it is to grab the attention of a congressional office and encourage staffers to respond.

6. Show up. If your representatives are at home in your district, attend their town halls and other public events, and make sure to do your homework. Also, even if you can't attend the annual Storming the Hill event in March, be sure to participate from home by calling, emailing, and posting on social media using #MOAASstorms.

URGENT Care Update

This article by Jim Absher originally appeared on Military.com, the premier resource for the military and veteran community.