

WICHITA CHAPTER

MOAA



MILITARY OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

MARCH 10, 2019

BY LT. COL. MICHAEL R. GEORGE

DEAR MOAA MEMBERS,

***HAPPY ST. PATRICK'S DAY!* AN OFFICIAL CHRISTIAN FEAST DAY CREATED IN THE EARLY 17TH CENTURY AND OBSERVED BY THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, THE ANGLICAN COMMUNION, THE EASTERN ORTHODOX CHURCH, AND THE LUTHERAN CHURCH. THE DAY COMMEMORATES SAINT PATRICK AND THE ARRIVAL OF CHRISTIANITY IN IRELAND. ITS CELEBRATION GENERALLY INVOLVES PUBLIC PARADES AND FESTIVALS, AND THE WEARING OF GREEN ATTIRE OR SHAMROCKS. (WIKIPEDIA) SINCE OUR NEXT MEETING IS ON ST PATRICK'S DAY, PLEASE FEEL FREE TO DRESS THE PART. IF COMING AS A LEPRECHAUN, PLEASE REMEMBER TO BRING YOUR POT OF GOLD. J**

AS FOR HAPPENINGS IN OUR CHAPTER, WE HOSTED THE KANSAS COUNCIL OF CHAPTERS QUARTERLY MEETING ON 23 FEBRUARY. RADM (RET) H. EDWARD PHILLIPS, COUNCIL PRESIDENT, PRESIDED OVER THE MEETING. THE WEATHER COOPERATED TO THE POINT WHERE ONLY ONE CHAPTER WAS NOT REPRESENTED, AND ALL THE OTHER CHAPTER ATTENDEES WERE ABLE TO HEAD HOME BEFORE THE WEATHER GOT BAD. AT THE MEETING WE MET MS JENNIFER YOUNT, SURVIVOR OUTREACH SERVICES SUPPORT COORDINATOR CONTRACTOR (CHENEGA HEALTHCARE SERVICES LLC), 451ST EXPEDITIONARY SUSTAINMENT COMMAND (ESC). MS YOUNT GAVE A PRESENTATION TO THE COUNCIL ON HER ROLE WITH THE 451 ESC AND HOW SHE CAN SUPPORT VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES. SHE SHOULD BE A GREAT RESOURCE TO SUPPORT OUR SURVIVING SPOUSE COORDINATOR, ROY YENCHESKY.

AT OUR FEBRUARY BRUNCH WE RECEIVED AN OUTSTANDING PRESENTATION FROM DAVID DENNIS, COL, USAF (RET), CHAIRMAN OF THE SEDGWICK COUNTY COMMISSIONERS. IT WAS GREAT TO HEAR OF ALL THE UPCOMING IMPROVEMENTS COMING TO SEDGWICK COUNTY. THE FACELIFT AND IMPROVEMENTS TO THE SEDGWICK COUNTY ZOO SHOULD BE INCREDIBLE. AT OUR BRUNCH THIS MONTH WE WILL HEAR FROM THE NEW PROFESSOR OF MILITARY SCIENCE, MAJ ERIC HOLLINGSWORTH, FOR WICHITA STATE UNIVERSITY. AGAIN, IF YOU HAVEN'T HEARD THE NEWS, WSU INTENDS TO OPEN AN ARMY ROTC UNIT THIS FALL. IT IS A NEW CONCEPT IN OPENING AND SETTING UP AN ROTC UNIT. THE KANSAS ARMY NATIONAL GUARD WILL DO THE SETUP, MANNING AND INITIAL OPERATION. MAJ HOLLINGSWORTH HAS QUITE A STORY ABOUT HOW THE WSU UNIT WAS APPROVED. I HOPE YOU CAN ATTEND TO HEAR IT.

ONE ITEM OF NOTE FROM THE NATIONAL MOAA WEBSITE, IF YOU HAVEN'T SEEN IT, IS THE RESULTS FROM MOAA SURVEY: "SATISFACTION WITH TRICARE COSTS KEEPS FALLING." SATISFACTION WITH SEVERAL AREAS OF TRICARE HAVE DROPPED. IF THAT'S THE TREND FOR TRICARE, I WONDER WHAT "MEDICARE FOR ALL" WILL LOOK LIKE. IN ADDITION, THERE IS ANOTHER ARTICLE ON HOW "THE VA IS TRYING TO REACH FEMALE VETERANS ABOUT THEIR HEALTH CARE." PLEASE VISIT THE MOAA NATIONAL WEBSITE TO READ THE FULL ARTICLES. FOR ADDITIONAL NEWS ABOUT CHANGES AND UPDATES TO RETIREE BENEFITS PLEASE VISIT [HTTPS://WWW.DFAS.MIL/RETIREDMILITARY/NEWSEVENTS/NEWSLETTER.HTML](https://www.dfas.mil/retiredmilitary/newsevents/newsletter.html).

FINALLY, PLEASE CONSIDER CONTACTING OUR CONGRESSMAN/SENATORS AND ADVOCATING FOR THE NECESSARY LEGISLATION TO ENSURE OUR BENEFITS ARE MAINTAINED.

AS ALWAYS, YOUR INPUT IS ALWAYS WELCOME. EMAIL ALL CONCERNS TO ME AT M2GEORGE55@GMAIL.COM. ALSO, PLEASE SAVE THE DATES FOR UPCOMING MO@@ MEETINGS: 17 MAR, 14 @PR AND, 19 MAY.

Remember: Daylight Savings begins March 10. Spring forward one hour.

MO@@ CHAPTER MEETING BRUNCH

OUR MONTHLY CHAPTER BRUNCH AND MEETING WILL BE MARCH 17, AT THE ROLLING HILLS COUNTRY CLUB. THE GUEST SPEAKER IS M@J. ERIC HOLLINGSWORTH. HE IS THE PROFESSOR OF MILITARY SCIENCE FOR THE WSU @ARMY ROTC PROGRAM. YOU'LL HEAR HOW THE PROGRAM GOT STARTED AND THE ROLE HE PLAYS IN THAT REVITALIZED OPERATION. THE BRUNCH BEGINS AT 11:30 A.M., AND THE MEETING WILL START AT 12:45 P.M. PLEASE MAKE PLANS TO JOIN US FOR WHAT PROMISES TO BE AN OUTSTANDING MEETING.

TROW's JANUARY BRUNCH

THE RETIRED OFFICERS WIVES CLUB WILL MEET MARCH 15 AT THE CANDLE CLUB, 6135 E. 13TH ST. N. THIS WILL BE THE TROW BIRTHDAY PARTY MEETING. THERE WILL BE A CHOICE OF MEALS – CHICKEN PARMESAN WITH BROCCOLI AND SALAD, OR PASTA PRIMAVERA. LUNCH STARTS AT 11:30 A.M. PLEASE PLAN TO ATTEND WHAT SHOULD BE A FUN MEETING.

National MOAA Goals for 2019

- **Prevent disproportional TRICARE fee increases.**
- **Sustain military pay comparability with the private sector.**
- **Stop erosion of compensation and non-pay quality-of-life benefits.**

- **End financial penalties for military survivors.**
- **End concurrent receipt penalties for military retirees.**
- **Ensure any TRICARE reform sustains access to top-quality care.**
- **Achieve equity of benefits for Guard and Reserve members with their active duty counterparts.**
- **Strengthen DoD-VA collaboration and services to support wounded warriors and an expanding population of women veterans.**
- **Ensure timely access to service-earned VA benefits.**
- **Protect military and veteran family support programs and policies.**

MOAA BACKS SENATE BILL TO END THE "WIDOWS TAX"

BY JAMES F. NAUGHTON JR.

SEN. DOUG JONES (D-@LA.) INTRODUCED LEGISLATION FEB. 28 TO END THE DEDUCTION OF SURVIVOR BENEFIT PLAN (SBP) ANNUITIES FROM DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION (DIC) PAID TO SURVIVORS OF FALLEN SERVICEMEMBERS, ALSO KNOWN AS THE "WIDOWS TAX."

MOAA HAS LONG SUPPORTED REPEAL OF THE WIDOWS TAX, BACKING SIMILAR LEGISLATION FROM HOUSE REP JOE WILSON (R-S.C.) AND OTHERS. THE CHANGE WOULD MEAN THAT IN CASES WHERE MILITARY SERVICE LED TO THE DEATH OF A SERVICEMEMBER, DIC WOULD BE PAID IN ADDITION TO THE SBP ANNUITY. @BOUT 67,000 MILITARY SURVIVORS WOULD BENEFIT FROM THIS LEGISLATION, WITH THE CURRENT OFFSET COSTING THEM ABOUT \$12,000 ANNUALLY.

"THE SBP-DIC OFFSET REMAINS GROSSLY UNFAIR TO THE MEMBERS OF THE MILITARY COMMUNITY WHO DESERVE OUR SUPPORT THE MOST," SAID LT.GEN. DANA T. @TKINS, US@F (RET), PRESIDENT AND CEO OF MOAA "WE THANK SEN. JONES FOR HIS LEADERSHIP ON THIS ISSUE, AND WE ENCOURAGE THEIR FELLOW LEGISLATORS TO JOIN THE FIGHT."

@CT NOW TO SEND YOUR ELECTED OFFICIALS A MOAA-SUGGESTED MESSAGE URGING THEM TO END THE WIDOWS TAX. YOU CAN DO SO BY GOING TO THE "@CTION CENTER" ON THE MOAA NATIONAL WEBSITE WWW.MOAA.ORG.

MORE LAWMAKERS BACK BLUE WATER NAVY BILL

BY @MANDA MEYERS

LEGISLATION TO PROVIDE BENEFITS TO ABOUT 52,000 "BLUE WATER" VETERANS WAS REINTRODUCED IN JANUARY AND NOW HAS THE BIPARTISAN SUPPORT OF 253 HOUSE LAWMAKERS. REP. MARK TAKANO (D-CALIF.), CHAIR OF THE HOUSE VETERANS @FFAIRS COMMITTEE, REINTRODUCED H.R. 299, THE BLUE WATER NAVY VIETNAM VETERANS @CT.

THE HOUSE UNANIMOUSLY PASSED A SIMILAR BILL LAST SUMMER, BUT IT FAILED TO PASS IN THE SENATE BEFORE THE SESSION ENDED. THE BILL WOULD REQUIRE THE V@ TO ASSUME VETERANS WHO SERVED ON SHIPS OFF THE COAST OF VIETNAM, BUT NEVER HAD "BOOTS ON THE GROUND," WERE EXPOSED TO @GENT ORANGE AND OTHER HARMFUL CHEMICALS THAT LED TO RARE CANCERS AND OTHER HEALTH PROBLEMS. @ LATE-TERM EFFORT TO PASS THE LEGISLATION LAST DECEMBER WAS SCUTTLED DUE TO OPPOSITION FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERAN'S @FFAIRS AND SOME SENATORS WHO EXPRESSED CONCERN WITH THE COST OF THE IMPLEMENTATION. WITH THE REINTRODUCTION OF THE LEGISLATION, HOWEVER, COMES RENEWED INTEREST IN SEEING THE BILL THROUGH TO PASSAGE. MILITARY.COM REPORTED EARLIER THAT JOHNNY ISAKSON (R-GA.), CHAIR OF THE SENATE VETERANS @FFAIRS COMMITTEE, HAS THE VOTES NECESSARY TO PASS THE BILL WHEN IT ARRIVES – WITHOUT THE SAME OPPOSITION THAT HELD UP THE BILL LAST YEAR. THE BILL ALSO PROVIDES RELIEF TO VETERANS EXPOSED TO @GENT ORANGE ON THE KOREAN DMZ AND EXPANDS BENEFITS TO THE CHILDREN OF VETERANS WHO SERVED IN THAILAND AND SUFFER FROM SPINA BIFIDA.

MO@@ CONTINUES TO WORK TO FIND SOLUTIONS FOR BLUE WATER VETERANS AND TO BUILD THE MECHANISM BY WHICH FUTURE TOXIC EXPOSURES MAY BE ADDRESSED AS THEY BECOME KNOWN. REACH OUT TO YOUR CONGRESSIONAL REPRESENTATIVES TODAY AND URGE THEM TO PASS H.R. 299 -- THE BLUE WATER NAVY VIETNAM VETERANS @CT TODAY.

PLEASE PAY YOUR CHAPTER DUES

DUES FOR 2019 ARE DUE. OUR TREASURER, MAJ. SHELLIE HARMON, REMINDS US THAT THE COST IS \$30 FOR ONE YEAR; \$55 FOR TWO YEARS, AND \$80 FOR THREE YEARS. SO FAR, MORE MEMBERS HAVE TAKEN ADVANTAGE OF THE DEAL WHICH LOWERS THE COST OF A 2-YEAR MEMBERSHIP BY \$5, AND A SAVINGS OF \$10 ON THE 3-YEAR PROGRAM. IF YOU HAVE NOT YET PAID YOUR DUES FOR 2019, *YOU CAN MAIL THEM TO: WICHITA MO@@ P.O. BOX 780292, WICHITA, KS 67278.*

SHARE THE GOOD NEWS

YOUR 2018-2019 CHAPTER OFFICERS

- **PRESIDENT** LTC MICHAEL GEORGE
- **1ST VICE PRESIDENT** LTC JOHN HUGHEY
- **2ND VICE PRES.** LTC GREG WILLINGHAM
- **TREASURER** M@ SHELLIE HARMON
- **SECRETARY** M@ EARL SHELLNER
- **PAST PRESIDENT** COL MICHAEL DILLARD
- **DIRECTOR** LCDR JOHN HYDE
- **DIRECTOR** LTC ROY YENCHESKY
- **DIRECTOR** M@ @NDY TRAGER

SURVEY MONKEY

FROM TIME TO TIME OUR CHAPTER PRESIDENT SENDS OUT A SURVEY TO ASSESS THE THOUGHTS OF CHAPTER MEMBERS CONCERNING A VARIETY OF SUBJECTS AND ACTIVITIES. PLEASE HELP US OUT BY RESPONDING TO THE SURVEYS WHEN THEY APPEAR IN YOUR EMAIL. THANKS.

