



Wichita Chapter News

MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA



May 2021

President's Corner

Dear Members, Spouses and Families of the Wichita Chapter of MOAA,

We are quickly approaching the end of our chapter meeting schedule for this year with only May remaining. Our chapter brunch on April 18th was a huge success. 38 members and guests were in attendance and our guest speaker was Captain Paul Duff of the Wichita Police Department. He briefed the attendees on two crime trends of which all members need to be aware. First, thieves are stealing catalytic converters from parked cars in driveways, streets, and parking lots. So, if you have a garage, use it. Second, thieves are breaking into vehicles and stealing handguns. If you carry a weapon in your vehicle, I recommend that you store it in the house at night.

Here is some great news for the chapter. MOAA awarded the Wichita Chapter the 2020 5-star chapter Col. Marvin J. Harris Communications Award for our chapter webpage. We can all thank Major Walt Nelson for his hard work and dedication in maintaining our chapter webpage. Thank you, Walt! The webpage may be accessed at www.wichitamoa.org/.

In April, our chapter donated \$250 to the Active Heroes organization. This organization's commission is to bring awareness to and help prevent veteran suicide. The organization conducted a Carry the Fallen ruck march here in Wichita on 10 April. Six chapter members participated in the march. Sgt. Joseph Clay, the Hamilton Middle School leadership instructor, organized the ruck march. Since the organization's founding, national veteran suicide rates have fallen from 22 per day to 17 per day.

On a legislative note, the Kansas portion of money needed to finance a Veterans Retirement home in northeast Kansas was approved by the Kansas governor. Kansas is still waiting on the federal portion of funding. The retirement home could be placed anywhere north and east of Great Bend, Kansas. The home will be a long-term care facility designed to care for veterans needing 24-hour medical care. The governor also signed into law a provision for military spouses that allows for reciprocity for professional licenses obtained in other states.

Our next luncheon is Sunday, 16 May, at the Rolling Hills Country Club. If you have any friends or acquaintances who are active duty, retired, or former military officers, please invite them to join us. The chapter will pay for their meal. A breakfast buffet will be served at a cost of \$16.00 per person. If possible, pay with a check due to our shortage of on hand cash for change. Our guest presenter will be a comedian named Bucky Walters. I

look forward to seeing all of you at Rolling Hills on 16 May. Plan to arrive at 11:15 a.m. Take care and be safe.

Sincerely, John Hughey, LTC, (Ret), USA President

JROTC Members Continue to Serve Despite the Pandemic

COL Robert Hester reports most high schools and middle schools conducted school-based National Awards ceremonies after the district program was cancelled due to Covid. North High had the only cadet ball in the district to make their awards. Colonel Hester also noted the annual Leadership Cadet Challenge physical fitness competition was conducted April 24th. Cadets from 7 middle schools competed in 5 events testing their physical capabilities. The winning team was Pleasant Valley. They were led by our former Chapter President, Major Andy Trager. Runner up champion was Jardine Middle School. Last but not least, former chapter president and East High JROTC instructor, Lt. Colonel Michael George is to be commended for 21 outstanding years of service to the district and city. He celebrates his farewell from 6 – 8 p.m., May 8th at the Candle Club in Wichita.

In other JROTC news, Major Shellie Harmon reported that ROTC members at Wichita State University helped guide JROTC students from Wichita high schools during the CPT Pitts Cup Challenge. Events included: Drill and ceremony, Lego competition, first aid, obstacle course, pushups, egg drop, and listening to a presentation about WSU ROTC programs and activities. About 30 students from Southeast and Heights High Schools recently participated in their first 3D Archery Competition. The meet was held at Tuttle Creek Reservoir in Manhattan, KS. They shot arrows at various 3D targets that resembled turkey, bear, fish and more. Sgt Joseph Clay, Marine Corps Instructor of Leadership Development at Hamilton Middle School organized a Warrior Battalion Ruck March to help raise funds to support Active Heroes. The organization brings awareness to and helps prevent veteran suicides. Cadets could walk 3, 6 or 9 hours. They raised \$2,000 in support of this veterans awareness program.

Pending Bill May Help Veterans' Families Get Benefits After Coronavirus Deaths

Stars and Stripes reporter, Nikki Wentling penned an article recently stating national veterans groups petitioned lawmakers to pass legislation to help families of coronavirus victims get access to government benefits. She reported that Sen. Krysten Sinema, D-Ariz., introduced a bill that requires the Veterans Administration to get a medical opinion to determine if a service-connected condition was the principal or contributing cause of death. The VA has been denying claims when death certificates said the veterans died of the virus rather than underlying conditions that stemmed from military service. Vietnam Veterans of America and Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors and Disabled American Veterans are pushing for passage of the bill. The Senate Veterans Affairs Committee has begun hearing the bill. No decision has been made.

Sue Bush Assumes the Role of TROW President

Karen Wohlwend has stepped down as TROW president as she continues to battle medical issues. She and her husband Jim are also moving to the Kansas City area. Sue Bush, a former TROW president, has taken the reins. Sue is also heavily involved with the Honor Flight program which sends veterans of war to Washington D. C. where programs and activities are conducted to honor their service to our nation.

It is Time to Pay Dues to Maintain Chapter Membership

Chapter Treasurer, Maj. Shellie Harmon, says to look for an email letting you know if you have prepaid the 2021 dues, or if it is time to renew. Chapter dues are \$30 for one year; \$55 for two years, and \$80 for three years. Surviving spouse members pay \$15 per year. If you did not get a notice, or have any questions, email Major Harmon at sharmon@usd259.net. Please continue to support your chapter.

Chapter Officers for 2020 – 2021

PRESIDENT	LTC John Hughey
1 st VICE PRESIDENT	LTC Greg Willingham
2 nd VICE PRESIDENT	LTC Joe Bilik
SECRETARY	Maj Earl Shellner
TREASURER	Maj Shellie Harmon
PAST PRESIDENT	Lt Col Michael George
DIRECTOR/McCONNELL AFB LIAISON	Col Michael Dillard
DIRECTOR/SURVIVING SPOUSE COORDINATOR	LTC Roy Yenchsky
DIRECTOR	MAJ Andy Trager