



# Wichita Chapter News

MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA



November 2021

## *President's Corner*

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

Wow! We are only 2 weeks from Thanksgiving. Honestly, with the palls of COVID, political division, economic uncertainty, and looming winter, it is easy to fall into a state of depression and fear. Mental peace is something that we all yearn for. Thanksgiving gives us an opportunity to refocus on the blessings that God has granted us that make life worth living. Sometimes these blessings are seemingly inconsequential such as a walk with your dog, the smell of bacon being cooked, or going out on a Sunday drive. Bigger blessings include the caress of a spouse, watching a child's sporting event, or living in a house that is paid off. I received a big blessing recently when my daughter informed me that she was pregnant. It will be my first grandchild and I am extremely excited about being involved in the upbringing of my daughter's child. I trust that this Thanksgiving will bring you opportunities to reflect on the many blessings in your lives.

Our 17 October brunch went very well. About 40 people were in attendance. West High School provided the Color Guard, and our guest speaker was Colonel (Retired) John Buckley, the human resources manager at Koch Industries. COL Buckley presented an engaging briefing on the history of our involvement in Afghanistan from a strategic planning perspective. I want to give a big thank you to Greg Willingham for arranging for such an interesting speaker. If you have any speaker ideas for future meetings, please contact Greg Willingham

Our next meeting is Sunday, 21 November. Our guest speaker will be Jeff Gaines, the Casualty Assistance and Survivor Benefits Representative for the 22d Air Refueling Wing. Thank you to Roy Yenchsky for arranging this speaker. Pleasant Valley Middle School will be presenting the colors.

At present, our 2d Vice President position is open and needs to be filled. The position is responsible for recruiting new members. If anyone is interested, please contact me, or talk to me at the next meeting.

I look forward to seeing all of you on 21 November. The buffet is \$16 which includes 1 raffle ticket. Further raffle tickets are \$5 for 6 tickets. Please pay with a check due to a shortage of cash for change. You should plan to arrive between 1100 and 1130 in order for you to have time to eat before the program starts at 1215. If you would like to donate a gift for the raffle, it would be appreciated. And please invite anyone who is an active

duty, retired, or former officer in the armed forces. As prospective members, the chapter will pay for their meals to include a spouse. See you on the 21st.

Sincerely,

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

## **Biography for the November Luncheon Speaker**

Jeffery W. Gaines is the 22<sup>nd</sup> ARW Casualty Assistance Representative for McConnell AFB. AS part of the Airman and Family Readiness Center, he assists military members and their families during difficult life situations. He is a retired U.S. Army veteran and served in a number of leadership positions in the Signal Corps and in support of Operations Joint Endeavor, Iraqi Freedom, Spartan Shield, and others. He has extensive training in a number of support areas dealing with victims of sexual assault and domestic violence. He also provides training in suicide awareness. Mr. Gaines will be our guest speaker at the Nov. 21st MOAA chapter brunch at Rolling Hills Country Club. Please join us for this informative and important presentation.

## **TROW News and Information**

Sue Bush, the president of TROW reported that TROW member Mareyn Giroux's husband, Peter, passed away. Services will be held 11 a.m., Nov.12 at St. Vincent DePaul Catholic Church, located at 123 N. Andover Road in Andover. Burial will take place at a later date. Sue asks that everyone Keep Mareyn and her family in your thoughts and prayers.

The next TROW luncheon will be at Newport Grill on Nov. 19 at 11:30 a.m. A speaker from Giving the *Basics* will make a presentation. Giving the Basics partners with non-profit organizations and local schools to distribute personal care items such as soap, shampoo, deodorant, toilet paper, toothpaste, and other essential hygiene items to children in local schools and adults who are in need of such items. Giving the Basics started its first affiliate program in Wichita during January 2019. The idea is based on the premise that some children were unable to attend school because they were being bullied due to poor hygiene. TROW has asked their members to bring a basic hygiene product to the November meeting to donate to those in need.

The last Kansas Honor Flight for 2021 returned to Wichita's Dwight D. Eisenhower National Airport on Nov. 5<sup>th</sup>. There were 31 men and women Kansas Veterans on board. The flights are flown on Southwest Airlines to Washington, D.C. to honor veterans from past wars. The cost to send one veteran round-trip is \$800. Kansas American Legion Post 4 has supported the flights since June 2012. The organization depends on volunteers to support the operations through charitable donations. Sue Bush reports that Walt Nelson, one of our local MOAA Chapter members flew on the previous flight which returned Oct. 8<sup>th</sup>. On that flight were veterans of World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam Conflict. Veterans interested in on taking one of the flights can contact Sue for applications. Kansas Honor Flight is always looking for volunteers to support the

program. Monthly meetings are held at American Legion Post #4 on the third Thursday of each month. The Post is located at Murdock and Water. The meetings start at 6 p.m., however those who would like to eat prior to the meetings can order hamburgers and cheeseburgers beginning at 4:30 p.m.

## **Wichita JROTC Cadets Highlight a Veteran's Day Ceremony**

Col. Robert Hester, JROTC Director for Wichita Public Schools reports the Wichita JROTC Leadership Corps will headline a Veteran's Day Ceremony Nov. 10 at the Century II Conventions Center Exposition Hall in Wichita from 10 – 11 a.m. More than 2,000 cadets from 8 high schools and 9 middle schools will participate in the annual program. Reviewing officer for the ceremony is Gil Alvarez, Deputy Superintendent of Academics for USD 259. Keynote speaker is Air Force 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Kelly Nguyen, a former JROTC cadet from Wichita. Music will be provided by the Southeast High School Madrigals and band. The cadets will pass-in-review at the conclusion of the ceremony.

Col. Hester also announced results of the final Air Capitol Leadership Drill Meet of the season. He said planning and execution of the meet was done by the Curtis Middle School Leadership Program. Excellent judging was done by the McConnell AFB Honor Guard. The bleachers were filled with parents and friends. Here are the results: 1<sup>st</sup> place in the Junior Varsity Color Guard went to Marshal Middle School, followed by Christa McAuliffe Academy (CMA), and Jardine Middle School. 1<sup>st</sup> place in the Junior Varsity Regulation Drill went to Mead MS, followed by Marshall and Jardine MS. Marshall took top spot in the Varsity Color Guard competition, followed by Jardine and Pleasant Valley MS. Top spot in the Varsity Regulation Drill went to Marshall, followed by Curtis and PVMS. The Individual Drill Competition title went to Aracelia Ramirez (Hadley MS) The following cadets placed 2<sup>nd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup>: Bryley Bigley (CMA), Kaj Gillespie (Jardine), Collin Fay (Curtis), and Roxanna Nunez (Mead).

The 8<sup>th</sup> grade Leadership Cadet Board also took place recently. Members of the board were Mr. Jonathan Wyss, Ms. Samantha Baze, Corps Commander Cadet/Colonel Jesse Bartlett and Col. Hester. Recorder for the board was Ms. Janell Johnson. Corps Deputy Commander Nicole Damari stayed with the cadets and prepared them for their presentations. Cadets were evaluated by the board based on their overall performance before the board, and in the Leadership Program and school activities. They were asked questions on Citizenship, Leadership, Current Events, customs and Courtesies and team Drill. Cadets appearing before the board were: Mason Wilson, Hamilton; Alexis Lozano, Curtis MS; Diana Aguilar-Garcia, PVMS; Aracelia Ramirez, Hadley MS; Tom Nguyen, Mead MS; Harmony Adams, Jardine MS; and Alex Ranson, Wells MS. The cadet selected as the Honorary Cadet was Alexis Lozano. Col. Hester extended congratulations to all the cadets for their outstanding performance. "Thanks to the board members and Corps Staff for their assistance in making the board a success." He also added that the schools had an exceptional drill season. "The teams were competitive, and the judging was excellent. My thanks and commendations to all for your efforts in training your teams and the professionalism displayed throughout the season."

## **Cadets From Derby High School Support Local Events**

Col. Michael Dillard, Director of AFJROTC programs at Derby HS reported that cadets at the school participated in a number of programs during the past two months. In October, six cadets volunteered at the Stone Creek Elementary School Movie Night, and seven cadets volunteered to help with the science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) event at Park Elementary School. Other activities included five cadets volunteering as ushers at the Derby HS Drama Play Performances. Seven cadets volunteered as escorts and Color Guard members at the Vietnam Movable Wall at Valley Center, and the following day Six cadets again volunteered as escorts and Color Guard at the Movable Wall and also escorted members of the highly decorated "Charlie Company." On Nov. 2<sup>nd</sup>, HQ AFJROTC conducted a Unit Evaluation on the Derby HS Program and awarded a rating of "Exceed Standards" with no discrepancies.

### **Chapter Officers for 2021 – 2022**

PRESIDENT	LTC John Hughey
1 <sup>st</sup> VICE PRESIDENT	LTC Greg Willingham
2 <sup>nd</sup> VICE PRESIDENT	(Presently vacant)
SECRETARY	Maj Earl Shellner
TREASURER	Maj Shellie Harmon
PAST PRESIDENT/LEGISLATIVE LIAISON	Lt Col Michael George
DIRECTOR/McCONNELL AFB LIAISON	Col Michael Dillard
DIRECTOR/SURVIVING SPOUSE COORDINATOR	LTC Roy Yanchesky
DIRECTOR	MAJ Andy Trager