



THE DEFENDER

A monthly publication of the Northwest Florida Military Officers Association
www.nwfmooa.org

Vol. 20 No. 2 Serving All Branches of The Uniformed Services FEBRUARY 2014

Breakfast Meeting & Discussion

When: Wed., 5 February 2014

Time: Open: 0700; Bkfst: 0715;
Meeting: 0800-0900

Place: Westwood Retirement
Resort, 1001 Mar Walt Dr, FWB

Program: John Voss,
"Live to be 100" Part II

Please:

- **MAKE A RESERVATION**

- Wear a name tag
- Bring proper change.
\$7.00 for everyone

Reservation deadline is Friday at noon prior to the meeting. Call Bill Van Hoesen at 225-2957 or send an email to: bvanhoesen@cox.net if you are attending.

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Off and Running

By Jeff Watson

Greetings Fellow Officers!

The installation of officers is behind us and we are off and running! This past month we had Col (Ret.) John Voss present part of his talk on how to live to 100. For those that could not make the meeting this past month, you should come to the next meeting where Col Voss will finish his very informative and sometimes humorous presentation.

If you think you know all about living a healthy lifestyle, I would say that John Voss has information that will benefit you and your family. Some of the information you probably learned years ago but have not thought about in a long time. Listening to his presentation brought back memories of my Cell Biology class from college. Everyone seemed to enjoy the presentation so I hope you will join us as he finishes his presentation.

First Vice President Paul Singleton is lining up a great list of speakers. If you would like your favorite speaker considered, send an email to Paul. As he mentioned at the last meeting, this is your chapter so let him know what topics you want to hear.

Speaking of that, by the time you get this newsletter I will have attended the mid-winter Florida Council of Chapters in Ocala. I am looking forward to hearing more about how other chapters are performing and looking for ways to improve what we are doing. The biggest issue for all chapters is success in recruiting.

As you know, the focus for this past year has been on chapter membership. Recruit a new member to our chapter and national MOAA will provide chapter incentives. MOAA's Chapter Recruiting 2014 still focuses on recruiting new chapter members. For every new incentive-qualified chapter member our chapter recruits between Jan. 1 and Dec. 31, 2014, we'll receive \$10, or more if the new member is a new Premium or Life MOAA member with a qualified voucher. Feb. 1, 2014, is the deadline to submit our chapter rosters in order to compete in the 2013 and 2014 chapter retention incentive program. MOAA will use the 2014 roster to compute the 2013 retention incentive. It also will establish the membership baseline for 2014.



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President's Message

By Jeff Watson, Colonel, USAF (Ret.)

We are deep into winter. Brrr! As I write this, the evening temperatures are in the thirties. This morning it was 27 degrees! Reminds me of a movie with W.C. Fields – “The Fatal Glass of Beer” where he famously claims “And it ain’t a fit night out ... for man nor beast.” Well, hang in there for another month and we’ll be alright.



Jeff Watson

Have you made your New Year Resolutions? Are you keeping them? The year has started out with great promise! Whatever you have planned, keep it positive and keep on with your resolutions.

We installed our new officers this month and we are off to a great start. We are still meeting at the Westwood Retirement Resort – Westwood - and folks are getting used to the location. We have good membership attendance at the meetings and I am pleased to see new faces and those that have not been in awhile. If you are one of those that has been planning to come back more often, 5 February will be a great time to start!

Tomorrow, I will be attending the mid-winter Florida Council of Chapters meeting in Ocala, Florida. That means I’ll be bringing the latest to you from the folks in Washington, D.C. You may know Colonel Barry Wright, USA (ret.). He will be meeting with us and I will learn what I can about successful recruiting. When I come back we’ll do what we can to implement some of the lessons learned from last year.

I mentioned awhile back that it’s time for an Officer’s Call. Since the Compass Rose has built “Doc’s Bar” down on the water, let’s go there! How about a Tuesday night in February instead of Thursday? I’d like to get together

Continued on page 4

PUBLIC RECORD

IN MEMORIAM: Mrs Jane Dale, AUX, 1/7/2014.

NEW MEMBER: Lt Col Buddy Bowman, USAF (Ret)

OFFICERS CALL

Join
US

Tuesday, February 25

5:15 pm - 7:15 PM

DOC’S BAR

at the

COMPASS ROSE

Cutoff For March Defender



Member Spotlight



Rick Anderson

Legislative Musings... by Bill Van Hoesen

I received the below midmonth so it may be OBE. If so, it will be interesting to compare what Congress said it was going to with what it actually did. If they haven't taken action by the time you receive this, it just means what else is new.

"Congress took a small step this week towards repealing recently passed COLA cuts for military retirees. Both the House and Senate passed the Consolidated Appropriations Act (H. R. 3547) – an omnibus package to fund the federal government for the remainder of the fiscal year – exempts medical (Chapter 61) retirees and survivors from the COLA cuts. A comprehensive fix could be on the way.

Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) is planning to combine the Senate omnibus veterans' benefits bill with a full repeal of the COLA cuts. The new bill (S. 1950) has the support of Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) and could be fast-tracked to the Senate floor for a vote soon. The original veterans' legislation (S. 944) enjoyed bipartisan support when it cleared the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee last fall.



Bill Van Hoesen

The new bill incorporates repeal of the unfair 1 percentage point COLA reduction for working age military retirees and currently serving members established in the Balanced Budget Act. It also addresses a number of major MOAA priorities for veterans including:

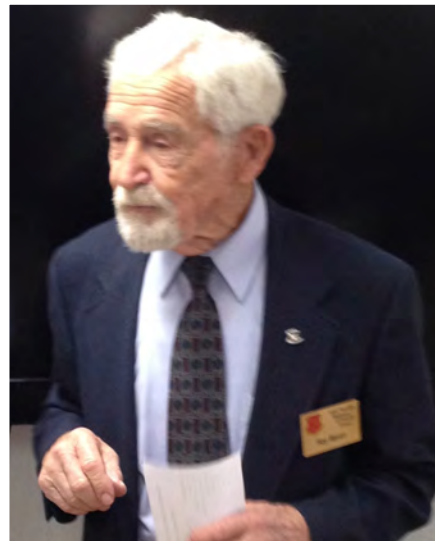
- 1) Extension of advance appropriations for all Dept. of Veterans Affairs accounts
- 2) Authorization for in-state tuition rates at public colleges for all student veterans using the new GI Bill
- 3) Honoring as veterans certain career Reserve members eligible for reserve retired pay
- 4) Authorization for Iraq and Afghanistan surviving spouses to the Post-9/11 GI Bill via the Gunnery Sgt. John D. Fry Scholarship Program
- 5) Retention of DIC by eligible widows who remarry at age 55
- 6) Improved care and services for veterans who were sexually assaulted in military service
- 7) Extension of VA health care enrollment opportunity for OIF-OEF veterans from 5 to 10 years
- 8) Renewal of the VOW to Hire Heroes Act veterans retraining assistance program

MOAA believes Congress must reach a bipartisan solution to fully and immediately repeal COLA-cutting provision, and address critical veterans' needs." (MOAA Legislative Update, 17 Jan 14)

Past/Current Presidents meet at Installation Ceremony



Past and Current Presidents.



**Lt Gen LeRoy Manor, Jr.,
Installation Officer, speaks to
attendees prior to ceremony.**

Continued from page 2

on 25 February from 5:15 – 7:15 p.m. Bring a friend and let's get more new members in 2014. Speaking of new members – I'd like to welcome Buddy Bowman as our newest member.

If you remember back about six months ago, member Clyde Locke mentioned to us that there were some gas stations that were changing back to ethanol-free gas. It seems there are a lot of environmental reasons that we should have more ethanol-free choices. If I left out any of the other details, perhaps Clyde can fill in with the rest of the story.

Switching gears – many of you are grandparents and enjoying retirement. A couple of years ago we went through the "Great Recession" and are supposedly out of the woods but to use that metaphor I would say we are on the tree line in our economic recovery. Why (and this is coming from someone without a degree in economics)? Because the country is in QE3 and has just reduced its bond buying from \$85B to \$75B a month. If we had a healthy economic checkup it seems to me there would be no assistance of this sort.

How would you like to hear more on this topic from someone who actually delves into retirement planning and legacy planning? If so, then stayed tuned! 1st VP Paul Singleton is working on a great list of speakers and one of those in the near future will be Joshua Scandlen from USAA Wealth Management. Many of us are USAA members so this information source should be one where we will feel no pressure but hopefully come away with information that we can use.

For those auxiliary members who have not been to a breakfast meeting but are reading this, I would like very much for you to come to one of our meetings. I promise you will find friendly faces and most likely an interesting speaker and a warm meal. Many of the MOAA chapters have auxiliary members that are actively involved in the organization. Our Northwest Florida Military Officers Association has two on our board of directors, Eileen Arpke and Ginny Mills. There is so much more our chapter can do and if you would like to help guide the group or just have fun or even just "check us out" then come to the next breakfast. ☺



Scott Berry

Greetings!

Dang has it been cold! But even on the coldest days I'm reminded of my five years in North Dakota. People didn't start complaining until it got to -10 degrees and our lowest temperature would be reason to break out the shorts and flip flops in Minot! Those were the good old days—NOT. I continue to be grateful I started my AF career at Minot and retired at Eglin rather than the other way around.

Our January monthly meeting was our installation of officers and yes, you still have Scott Berry to kick around for one more year. We also had a brief presentation by John Voss about "living to be 100." Regrettably, we didn't have time to hear his whole presentation but the part he did present had tons of good information. He even broke down some of those multi-syllabic words into smaller clear text chunks that even an English Literature major like myself could understand. If he had translated it into iambic pentameter I would have been home free and talking his language. He didn't but I'm one of his strongest advocates to get the rest of his presentation at the next meeting. Plan to attend and hear some good tips.

Even though the mistletoe from the Annual Military Ball has finally dried up some of us are already talking about the 2014 event with the belief that one can never have too much prior planning so stay tuned. **I solicit anyone's comments—positive or negative—about last month's events. Send me your thoughts!**

Finally, thank you to those who have already paid their 2014 dues. For those who haven't, we don't want to lose you. If your mailing label states "2013" I'll quote what I continue to hear from my children—PLEASE SEND MONEY!

Berry "Out"

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Auxiliary Corner

By Patricia Bergquist, chair, and Kathy Prout, vice chair,
Auxiliary Member Advisory Committee

What a busy year 2013 has been for the Auxiliary Member Advisory Committee (AMAC)! We welcomed two new members to the committee in April: Sharon DeVaney, Pikes Peak (Colo.) Chapter, and Gray Warmunde, Calusa (Fla.) Chapter. While we reluctantly accepted Warmunde's resignation due to personal obligations over the summer, we appreciate her contributions to the AMAC.

In April 2013, the AMAC participated in the national Storming the Hill event, which focused on TRICARE increases, military pay raises, concurrent receipt of military retired pay and VA disability, and the Survivor Benefit Plan/Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (SBP/DIC) offset.

The AMAC focused on educating members of the 113th Congress on the impact of the SBP/DIC offset. With the help of auxiliary liaisons; MOAA President Vice Adm. Norbert R. Ryan Jr., USN (Ret); organizations in The Military Coalition; and an SBP/DIC offset Facebook page, we gathered more than 100 surviving spouses from 20 states to come to Washington, D.C., to lobby on this issue. These individuals represented Gold Star Wives, the Society of Military Widows, and other military organizations, as well as family and friends.

On July 17, the AMAC successfully led its first Hill-storming event focused only on the SBP/DIC offset. We began the day with a breakfast with congressional legislative assistants and military legislative assistants. Sen. Joe Wilson (S.C.) and Ryan spoke about the injustice of the offset. Two surviving spouses, Traci Voelke and Suzanne Gerstner, delivered personal, compelling testimonials on the offset's impact on their families.

Continued on page 6

Better left unread

When William joined the army he disliked the phrase 'fire at will'.

President's Message (cont.)

Continued from page 4

I know that many of you remember to make your breakfast reservations after you get the Defender so take a break from reading and make your reservation on line or call Bill Van Hoesen if you don't have a computer. Believe me, he's checking his list and checking it twice! Actually, he needs to let Westwood know how many meals to prepare so let's help Bill.

I don't want to end on a somber note but I want to mention my friend, Jane Dale, who passed away this month. She was the spouse of one of our former presidents, Jack Dale. Jack passed away a few short years before Jane. I met both of them through another social organization just after I retired from active duty and returned home. It was Jack who invited me to join this chapter. I know many of you knew them both and it is only fitting to say farewell.

I want to encourage you to be active or stay active in those political issues that affect you as a military member, spouse or widow. You may know that Congress just passed a budget that takes away a one percent cost of living allowance for those working retirees under 62. You may say "that's not me" or "that's okay" and it is not my intent to take a position on this other than to remind you that it is good to stay engaged with your elected leaders. Reminds me of a poem written by MARTIN NIEMÖLLER: "FIRST THEY CAME FOR THE SOCIALISTS..." You may have read it. It is not always better to stay on the sidelines.

Finally, I want to encourage each of you to do what you can to support our ROTC Scholarship Fund! This is our primary fund-raising purpose and it makes me so proud to see these young junior ROTC cadets succeed. Each month they come to post the colors for our breakfast. This year, Fort Walton Beach High School has supported us. In the past we had excellent support from Choctawhatchee High School and I would like to see Niceville High School next. If you know the JROTC point of contact at NHS, let me know.

Until we meet again, we are ADJOURNED!

Jeff Watson

Treasurer's Update

By Tom Churan, Treasurer

I look forward to assuming duties of your treasurer .

I commend Scott Berry for assuming the Treasurer duties in addition to that of that of Secretary and others i.e photographers etc , which he does with such flair.

If you read his treasurers report in the January issue of the *DEFENDER*, we are operating in the **RED**. My job, along with those of the other new officers and board members is to put us back in the **BLACK**.

As a start, Scott and I met with Tim Herndon of CRI (see his business card elsewhere in this issue) on process and procedures. He offered his services at no cost to the chapter and we should hear from him shortly.

More to come.



Tom Churan

Auxiliary Corner (cont.)

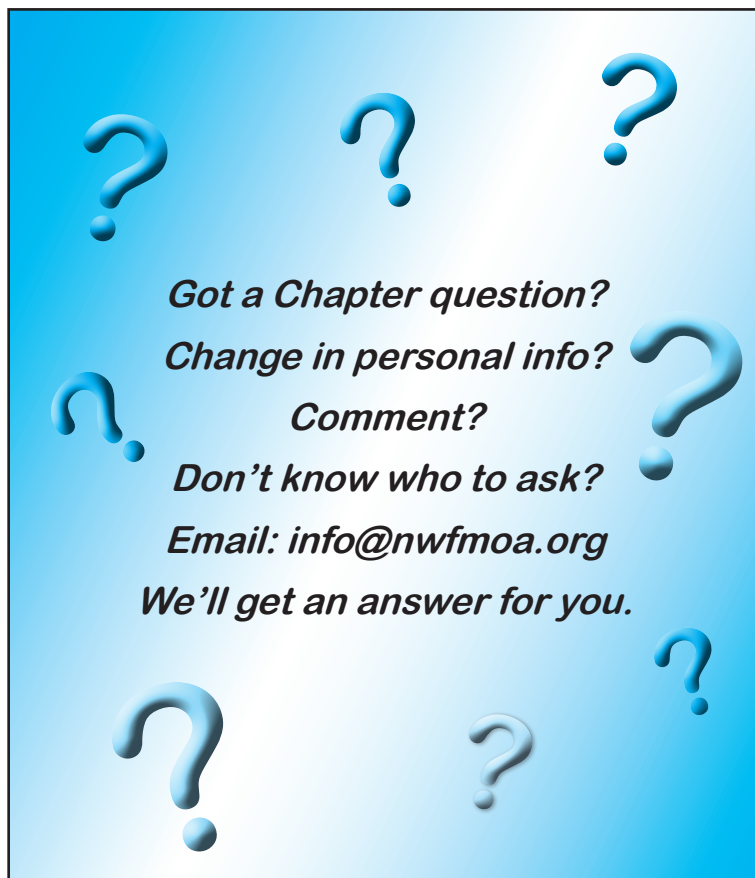
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Following breakfast, 38 teams stormed the House, while four teams, including Ryan and MOAA's Government Relations Director Col. Mike Hayden, USAF (Ret), tackled the Senate to gain cosponsors and support for H.R. 32 and S. 734 — bills that would repeal the SBP/DIC offset. Teams left the Vow of Honor brochure, an SBP/DIC fact sheet, and a page of five surviving spouse testimonials in each office.

When the "stormers" returned home, AMAC members encouraged them to visit local congressional offices, send emails and letters, and make phone calls to garner support for H.R. 32 and S. 734. Currently, H.R. 32 has 186 cosponsors, and S. 734 has 31 cosponsors.

2013 Auxiliary Liaison of the Year Ginny Canady, from the Riverside March Field (Calif.) Chapter, with Edie Rieken, the 2012 recipient from the Portland (Ore.) Chapter, were recognized at MOAA's 2013 annual meeting in Colorado Springs, Colo. Rieken had to cancel her trip to the 2012 annual meeting because of the effects of Superstorm Sandy.

The committee unanimously decided to maintain the current chair, Patricia Bergquist, and vice chair, Kathy Prout, through 2014.



Got a Chapter question?
Change in personal info?
Comment?
Don't know who to ask?
Email: info@nwfmoo.org
We'll get an answer for you.



CRI
CARR
RIGGS &
INGRAM

D. Timothy Herndon, CPA
Partner

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Logical Puns

I wondered why the baseball was getting bigger.
Then it hit me.

Off and Running (cont.)

Continued from page 1

Finally, it's great to know that our scholarship program is reaping some rewards. Our chapter received a 'thank you' letter from one of the recipients from last spring. What a delightful letter to read! The student at the University of Nebraska and is in ROTC expecting to graduate and get commissioned in the spring of 2017. She received a \$1500 dollar scholarship from us and is worth every bit of it as I consider her academic achievement, her goals that she has set and simply because she had the good graces and presence of mind to thank her benefactors.

We have a lot going on; come join us!

Jeff Watson, Chapter President

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Donor Information (if not printed on check):

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Gift is tax deductible to the extent allowable by law.

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| Membership Renewal 1 yr - \$25.00, 2 yr - \$48.00, 3 yr - \$65.00 | | | | | | | |
| Life Membership Dues** | | | | | | | |
| <u>Age</u> | <u>Dues</u> | <u>Age</u> | <u>Dues</u> | | | | |
| 101+ | Free | 71-75 | 240.00 | | | | |
| 96-100 | 50.00 | 66-70 | 275.00 | | | | |
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