

2018 | April



THE BORDER BULLETIN

EL PASO CHAPTER OF MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA



Nationally Ranked Five-Star Chapter • MOAA Affiliate from January 23, 1956 • Our 62nd Year

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2001 thru 2017

Communications Award Print Newsletter

Five Star

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Runner-up

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2010 thru 2013

Runner-up

2009 and 2014

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2007



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

COL Forrest Smith, USA, Retired

1. Your El Paso MOAA Chapter. In the last MOAA Border Bulletin I highlighted the Top 10 Legislative Goals for MOAA National. In this issue I want to discuss briefly our method at the local level, in supporting these goals and highlighting support to our veterans and their families here at the local community level.

a. Your local Chapter will place the priority of its effort in 2018 in reaching out to the community, identifying interesting initiatives designed to help veterans and their families, and by actively supporting local Veteran Service Organization initiatives. You will continue to see our MOAA Outreach Program highlighting these opportunities and actively seeking to support them. I want to encourage you to read BG USA (RET) Kotter's report as this key initiative, the MOAA Outreach Program continues to highlight opportunities to support our local veterans. During our last luncheon we highlighted two key opportunities to support Veterans. First, we invited Mr. Kirby Prickett to speak to the guests about the Honor Flight program. This program flies veterans at no cost, to Washington D.C. each October for the purpose of visiting the national monuments. Your Chapter partnered with AUSA and the West Region AUSA President, Mr. Gus Rodriguez, to present a \$1000 check in order to sponsor an El Paso WW II Veteran for this coming October 2018 trip. We are actively seeking WW II veterans so that we might continue to support this program in the future. This is a program El Pasoans should not only be aware of, but should actively consider supporting.

b. The main guest speaker during the luncheon was Judge Angie Barrill, the 346th District Court Judge who initiated the El Paso Veteran's Treatment Court Program, and who runs the program today with Judge William E. Moody. The mission of the program is to divert justice involved veterans and active service members from the traditional criminal justice system by assisting them and their families with treatment and judicial monitoring to afford them the tools needed to lead a productive and law abiding life. Veterans, or active service members of the U.S. Armed forces, must apply to the Veteran's Court Program through their attorney, Community Supervisor or Judge. All applicants undergo substance abuse and mental health assessments to determine the appropriateness of the program in meeting the needs of the individual. On the last Wednesday of each month Judge Barrill holds court and reviews each case with the veterans enrolled in this program, reviewing their individualized treatment program and their progress with debt payments, sobriety, and ability to continue abiding by the law. Applicants are assigned fellow veteran mentors who assist and guide applicants through the program. Additionally, the program coordinates with the Veterans Benefit Administration to assess applicants to determine whether the applicant qualifies for disability pension, compensation, education benefits and/or vocational rehabilitation. A few of us attended the Veteran's Treatment Court on 28 February, and witnessed first hand, perhaps the most inspiring program dedicated to caring for our veterans, that I have seen. We had the opportunity to meet with the Judge and her team and discuss possible ways to continue to support this tremendous program. Several members of the local MOAA Chapter intend to pursue participation in the Mentor program. I encourage each of you to attend one of these Veteran's Treatment Court Program sessions, and consider participating in this mentorship program.

c. Our next MOAA Luncheon is scheduled for 14 April at the Underwood Golf Course. You can find out more information for the next luncheon inside this Border Bulletin, but I also want to highlight that on that same day, 14 April from noon to 1330, we will also support numerous local veteran's organizations in the annual Massing of the Colors, sponsored by the Military Order of the World Wars (MOWW) at San Raphaels Church (2301 Zanzibar Street). If you would like more information you can contact LTC Pauline Ballesteros USA (RET) at 915-449-8994.

2. Support your El Paso Veteran's Community. So what can you do?

A. Get Informed. Understand MOAA's Top Ten Goals for the year, and track your local Chapter's efforts to highlight local veteran's support programs and initiatives.

B. Get involved.

(1) Communicate directly with your political representatives. Communicate directly to your elected officials and be heard. It's easy. Go to www.moaa.org, and use their simple tools.

(2) Get involved in supporting local veterans support initiatives. There is no more rewarding opportunity than to volunteer your time to support our veteran community. We are going to help you find an opportunity to help by highlighting local programs and initiatives to help our veterans and their families.

(3) Become a MOAA Member and speak with one voice. Your membership entitles you to access to, and use of valuable planning tools, and continuous lobbying efforts to preserve your earned military benefits. Join now by visiting www.elpasomoaa.org.

"Professional Leaders belong to Professional Organizations." Become part of the solution. Join MOAA.

"Never Stop Serving".

Forrest Smith COL, USA, Retired
President

El Paso MOAA Outreach Foundation

NAME

The name of this organization shall be El Paso Chapter Outreach Foundation of the Military Officers Association of America, herein after referred to as the MOAA Outreach Foundation. Short Title: elpasomoaaoutreach.org.

The El Paso Chapter Outreach Foundation is registered with the IRS as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. All donations are 100% tax deductible.

Your generous end of the year donations will provide a great amount of finances to the various agencies that we support. We have an excellent outlook for 2018 thanks to your giving to the Foundation. We are still seeking your input on suggestions about agencies or groups for the Foundation's consideration to provide monetary assistance.

The Foundation board has reviewed the 2017 donations and is in the process of establishing a 2018 budget at our next Board Meeting. The Foundation has the ability to be a viable partner with those agencies and groups who provide support to our Veterans, Active Duty personnel, and military families.

The Foundation has heard back about the utilization of our original \$500 donation to the Houston MOAA Chapter for hurricane relief. They located current and past members of their Chapter, who had damage but all replied they were OK and to provide the monies to folks who were in desperate circumstances. Because of the reply and how the donation was utilized, the Foundation has sent the remainder of the \$220 contributed through the Go Fund Me effort. The total donation will be \$720. How generous to fellow veterans in their recovery efforts. A Houston MOAA Chapter Board member was contacted by the Richmond DAV Chapter who had several veterans with dire needs.



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Richmond is a rural community SW of Houston that had significant flooding damage from two rivers. Being out of the Houston damage limelight, they did not get as much exposure to all the relief agencies. The needs of veterans living in that area were just as great from the flooding damage. We have also received a thank-you letter and receipt from the DAV Chapter. Their reply was gracious and stated that their major damage will require years to fully recover and the need continues.

At our February Chapter meeting the Foundation joined with AUSA in making two \$500 donations to the Honor Flight of Southern New Mexico. This enables a WWII veteran to make a



DFAS Changes Mailing Address,

the Defense Finance and Accounting Service announced it was changing mailing addresses for retirees and annuitants. Retired Pay correspondence should be addressed to DFAS, U.S. Military Retired Pay, 8899 E 56th St., Indianapolis, IN, 46249-1200. Annuitant correspondence should be addressed to DFAS, U.S. Military Annuitant Pay at the same address.

three day trip to Washington DC to first of all visit the WWII memorial and other memorials. The trip provides many emotional remembrances to the veteran. This Honor Flight organization is seeking WWII veterans from El Paso to make this trip. Anyone desiring to be a Guardian to assist a veteran during a trip is also being recruited. They make one trip a year usually in September. Contact either Forrest Smith or me for further information.

The Outreach Foundation continues to evolve and grow in actions.

Service by Serving Others

Jack W. Kotter

Jack Kotter BG, USA, Retired

APRIL GUEST SPEAKER



BG Laura L. Yeager

Brigadier General Laura L. Yeager assumed command of Joint Task Force North on September 29, 2017. Prior to her current assignment, she served as the Chief of Staff of the California National Guard's Joint Staff from 2013-2016 then becoming its Director until 2017.

Brigadier General Yeager's active military service began in May of 1986 after receiving her commission through the Reserve Officer Training Corps program at the California State University, Long Beach. Her first assignment was as a Medical Platoon Leader, 423rd Medical Company at Fort Lewis, Washington followed by attendance at the Initial Entry Rotary Wing training school at Fort Rucker, Alabama. Her subsequent assignments include Aeromedical Evacuation Officer, "FLATIRON," at Fort Rucker, Alabama, as Assistant Administrator at Walter Reed Army Medi-

cal Center, and Company Commander, Medical Center Brigade. In 1992, Brigadier General Yeager was assigned as the Aeromedical Platoon Leader for the 507th Medical Company at Fort Hood, Texas. In February of 1994, Brigadier General Yeager was reassigned as an instructor at the Army Medical Department Center and School at Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

After transitioning to the National Guard in 1995, Brigadier General Yeager served in a variety of assignments in both the California and Texas National Guard including: Operations Officer of the Headquarters, 3rd Battalion, 140th Aviation Regiment, Equal Opportunity Advisor and S-1 of the 49th Aviation Brigade in Austin, Commander, 3rd Battalion, 140th Aviation Regiment and Executive Officer 40th Combat Aviation Brigade. Brigadier General Yeager served as the Deputy Commanding Officer for the 40th Combat Aviation Brigade during its deployment in support of Operation NEW DAWN 2010-2011 and assumed command of the Brigade in 2012.

Brigadier General Yeager's civilian education includes a Baccalaureate Degree in Psychology from the University of California at Irvine and a Master's Degree in Counseling Psychology from Chapman University College. Brigadier General Yeager is also a graduate of the United States Army War College from where she earned a Master's Degree in Strategic Studies in 2011. She and her husband, Curtis, have four sons.



Chapter President, Forrest Smith, greets Guest Speaker, Judge Angie Barrill, 346th State District Court, at the February 2018 Membership Meeting.

Lunch Menu April

Schnitzel
Home Fried Potatoes,
Steamed Broccoli, Cauliflower,
Baby Carrots
Tossed Green Salad w/dressing, ,
Dinner Rolls w/Butter,
Coffee, Tea and Water,
MOAA Cake

Meeting Program

Saturday, 14 April
Underwood Golf Course

Sequence of Events

11:00 — 11:45	Social Hour
11:45 — 1200	Opening Ceremony
12:00 — 12:45	Meal Service
12:45 — 13:30	Program
13:30 — 13:45	Door Prize Drawing
13:45 — 14:00	Closing Ceremony

Please submit your Lunch Reservations no later than Monday, 9 April, 2018

Treasurer: MOAA
PO Box 6144
El Paso, TX 79906-0144
All dinner reservations with payment to our postal mail box

\$20 Per Person

**REMITTANCE
ENVELOPE ENCLOSED**

Report a Retiree Death

Monday - Friday:

0730 - 1700

915-568-5207

After Hours (Installation)

915-569-6950/6951

2018 EL PASO CHAPTER MOAA EVENTS SCHEDULE

April 14, 2018	Massing of Colours
April 14, 2018	April Membership Meeting and Luncheon
April 17	Tax Day 2018
May 28, 2018	Memorial Day
June 9, 2018	June Membership Meeting and Luncheon
June 14, 2018	Flag Day
June 17, 2018	Father's Day



FORT BLISS VISITOR POLICY

As part of Fort Bliss' continued efforts to improve installation access, five Visitor Control Centers (VCCs) will begin operating on the 9th of August.

All visitors to Fort Bliss will need to obtain a Visitors Pass at one of the following VCCs before entering the installation: Buffalo Soldier, Chaffee, Old Ironsides (Global Reach), Sheridan, or Biggs Airfield Main (Sergeant Major Blvd). Visitor passes are good for a maximum of 30 days.

Fort Bliss Visitor Control Centers

The Buffalo Soldier VCC will operate from 5 a.m.-9 p.m. every day of the week, including holidays.

The Master Sgt. Peña VCC will be closed to the public indefinitely for visitor passes, but will be open for un-cleared contractor processing only.

The Sheridan VCC will be closed to the public indefinitely for visitor passes and will process foreign visitors and special access only.

However, the Peña and Sheridan VCCs will be the primary automated installation entry registration points, operating between 7:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. for AIE registration (Mondays-Fridays only). The specific start date for AIE registration will be published in the near future.

The following hours still apply for Fort Bliss VCCs: the Chaffee VCC will operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week (including holidays), and the Old Ironsides VCC will operate from 5 a.m.-9 p.m. every day of the week, including holidays.

Visitors to William Beaumont Army Medical Center are required to use the Fred Wilson Access Control Point and visitors to the McGregor Range Complex are required to use the McGregor Front Access Control Point. Hours of operation: 24 hours, 7 days a week, for both of these ACPs.

As a reminder, all drivers requiring entry to the installation must possess a valid state issued driver's license, vehicle registration document, and proof of insurance for a pass to be issued. All vehicles are subject to random security inspections.

All DOD ID card holders (military, dependent, retiree, and DOD/DA civilians) are authorized to escort those that do not possess a DOD ID card. Individuals being escorted must possess a valid form of government issued ID card (state driver's license or ID card) and present it when entering at the Access Control Point. If an individual does not possess a valid form of government issued ID, they cannot be escorted and must obtain a pass at a VCC.

DOD ID card holders escorting visitors assume responsibility for the escorted visitors. The authorized escort must remain with their guests at all times while they are on the installation.

Retiree and Annuitant Pay Dates for 2017

Entitlement Month	Retiree Payment Dates	Annuitant Payment Dates
January	Thursday, Feb. 1, 2018	Thursday, Feb. 1, 2018
February	Thursday, Mar. 1, 2018	Thursday, Mar. 1, 2018
March	Friday, Mar. 30, 2018	Monday, Apr. 2, 2018
April	Tuesday, May. 1, 2018	Tuesday, May 1, 2018
May	Friday, June 1, 2018	Friday, June 1, 2018
June	Friday, June 29, 2018	Monday, July 2, 2018
July	Wednesday, Aug. 1, 2018	Wednesday, Aug. 1, 2018
August	Friday, Aug. 31, 2018	Tuesday, Sept. 4, 2018
September	Monday, Oct. 1, 2018	Monday, Oct. 1, 2018
October	Thursday, Nov. 1, 2018	Thursday, Nov. 1, 2018
November	Friday, Nov. 30, 2018	Monday, Dec. 3, 2018
December	Monday, Dec. 31, 2018	Wednesday, Jan. 2, 2019

WBAMC Pharmacy Services

Main Hospital Pharmacy

Monday through Wednesday and Friday	7:30 AM – 6:00 PM	915-742-2793
Last Thursday of every month	8:30 AM – 6:00 PM	
Saturday	9:00 AM – 5:00 PM	
Closed Sundays and Federal Holidays		

Freedom Crossing PX Pharmacy

Monday – Friday	8:30 AM – 6:00 PM	915-742-9017
Saturday & Training Holidays	9:00 AM – 5:00 PM	
Closed Sundays and Federal Holidays		

Soldier and Family Medical Clinic (SFMC) Pharmacy

Monday – Friday	7:30 AM – 6:30 PM	915-742-1802
Closed Saturdays, Sundays, and Federal Holidays		

Soldier Family Care Clinic (SFCC) Pharmacy

Monday – Friday	7:30 AM – 6:30 PM	915-742-1400
Closed Saturdays, Sundays, and Federal Holidays		
Pharmacy Refill Services		915-742-1400

El Paso VA Health Care System Pharmacy

There are four convenient options for refilling prescriptions which can then be mailed directly to your home.

Choose any process that is easy for you to use:

- Call the automated phone system at (915) 564-6100 ext. 6110 or 1-800-672-3782 ext. 6110.
- Follow the directions to process your refill.
- Mail in your refill slips.
- Drop the refill slip in the mail-out box located in the pharmacy.
- Use the MyHealthVet Website: www.myhealth.va.gov

Please note, window service at the Pharmacy will be limited to new prescriptions only. So, for all refills, please use one of the 4 options listed above.

Thank you in advance for using these new steps which should improve the speed and efficiency of getting your prescriptions from the El Paso VAHCS Pharmacy.

Extended Hours

Monday and Friday: 8:00 am to 4:45 pm. Pharmacy intake window will be closed at 4:30 pm.

Tuesdays: 9:00 am to 5:45 pm. Pharmacy intake will be closed at 5:30 pm.

Wednesdays and Thursdays: 7:00 am to 5:45 pm. Pharmacy intake will be closed at 5:30 pm.

Saturday: 8:30 am to 10:30 am for patients with primary care appointment only.

Location

El Paso VAHCS
2nd Floor, West Hallway

Contact Numbers

915-564-7942
800-672-3782



DOC'S CORNER

Dr. William Davitt

WHY? Sometimes doctors quit because they no longer perform at a level that meets their personal standards. Or there could be a health problem. And some quit because of the ever-changing medical insurance climate. Then there's some who keep working; but set up a concierge practice where they charge a flat fee for 'special' treatment. This new system automatically excludes some prior patients.

Or maybe YOU changed your insurance plan and your former doctor isn't on the new plan

WHEN YOU LOSE YOUR DOCTOR

ACTION While the actual reason may not matter, your action does. You might get a head start by picking up vibes during your most recent office visit. If that's the case, just ask. Or you'll get a letter. Or the doctor might publish an announcement in the El Paso Times.

If your doctor is selling his practice, you might consider giving the new doctor a chance.

If not, once you get notice, quickly gather your records to include all labs and special tests [MRI/CT] results. [You should actually have a file at home, even if there's little chance you'll need to change doctors].

Typically, there will be a deadline. After that, your records might be in the hands of a custodian and a \$25 charge [or more] might be levied.

If you're first in line getting your records, and you've been with your doctor for a long time, you might ask for a summary, so your new doctor doesn't

have to wade through 50 pages. That's an invitation for something critical to be missed.

FINDING A NEW DOCTOR

Now the tough part. If you don't have any prospects, you might ask your 'old' doctor's staff, or friends, or fellow MOAA members for recommendations. Truthfully, most of our colleagues are already over-subscribed, but it doesn't hurt to ask your preferred doctor to add you on. It never hurts to send a letter and jump over the gatekeeper. Truth be told, most of you have the best insurance on the planet [Medicare plus TriCare for Life] and you take good care of yourselves, and follow orders. Couldn't ask for more! So, you're all A++ patients.

Dr. Bill Davitt, Board Certified Eye Physician and Surgeon

Dr. Dan Washburn, Board Certified Eye Physician and Surgeon [will take over Dr. Davitt's practice, Summer, 2019]

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HELLO GIRLS:

U.S. WWI TELEPHONE OPERATORS IN FRANCE

They were known as the “Hello Girls” — American women fluent in French and English who answered the urgent call for telephone operators needed in France during World War I. They took oaths to join the U.S. Army Signal Corps, underwent training by AT&T before boarding ships to Europe, heading to war before most of the American doughboys arrived in France, connected 26 million calls and ultimately proved to be a significant factor in winning the war. And then they were forgotten.

A documentary filmmaker from Wisconsin has created a one-hour film about the American phone operators who served in the Army Signal Corps during World War I to shine a spotlight on a group of brave, selfless women who were not officially recognized for their work until it was too late for most of them. The film will be shown at the Women’s Memorial at Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia on 1 MAR, almost 100 years to the day the first ship carrying women phone operators left the U.S. “Telephone technology was really what America brought to the war,” said Jim Theres, a Racine native who hopes to bring the film to Wisconsin this year. “Women by World War I had dominated the field as telephone operators. Gen. John Pershing (commander of the American Expeditionary Forces) said we have women who do this in America and I need them over here.”

The Army’s initial request for 100 volunteers was greeted with 7,600 applications. A total of 223 women — including two with Wisconsin connections — eventually traveled to France. This was two years before women in Amer-



Gen. John J. Pershing inspects female operators serving in Europe during World War I.

ica were allowed to vote. “Every command to advance or retreat or hold fire was delivered by telephone and it took an operator to connect that call,” said Elizabeth Cobbs, author of “The Hello Girls: America’s First Women Soldiers,” published last year. French officers frequently needed to communicate with American officers and it was the American female phone operators who put those calls through and stayed on the line to act as simultaneous translators. That meant the women handled national security secrets, frequently served near the front lines and came under bombardment, and quickly, efficiently and calmly handled numerous calls. Male telephone operators, many of whom were disdainful of the job they considered women’s work, took as long as 60 seconds to connect a call; when the women arrived, the timing was cut to 10 seconds. “As one woman wrote — their hands flitted like hummingbirds over the wires,” said Cobbs.

The two women with ties to Wisconsin were Martina Heynen of Green Bay and Hildegard Van Brunt, a California native who settled in Milwaukee in the mid-1920s. Both sailed to France in the second group of phone operators in April 1918. Van Brunt’s mother was born in Paris and taught her daughter to speak French. Van Brunt was 19 when she headed to France and met William Abbott, an American soldier she married after the war. They moved to Milwaukee to run his family’s furniture store, said Van Brunt’s granddaughter, Elizabeth Goessling. Goessling has fond memories of her grandmother and knew she served in France during World War I but thought Van Brunt was with the Red Cross. During a re-

cent interview, Goessling learned her grandmother was, in fact, a phone operator. “I thought she was really cool. She was my favorite. (Her World War I service) was just another cool thing she did,” said Goessling, who lives in Madison. Van Brunt’s mother also served in France during the war; Goessling thinks she was a Red Cross volunteer.

Two female operators died in France in the Spanish Flu epidemic, including one woman who died Nov. 11, 1918, the day the war ended. Grace Banker was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal, one of only 18 of the 16,000 Army Signal Corps officers to receive the medal one step higher than the Silver Star. “I think Pershing and the generals recognized the role the women played in helping win the war. They gave one of the 223 women one of the highest awards you could get in World War I,” said Cobbs. In his documentary, Theres interviewed Cobbs, families of several telephone operators, and the current national American Legion commander, Denise Rohan, who is from Wisconsin. Rohan is attending the March 1 premiere of the documentary.

When the war ended, many remained in France or were sent to Germany to continue working phone switchboards through the Treaty of Versailles. The last women returned home in 1920. Many tried to join veterans groups, including the American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars. When they were asked for their Army discharge papers, they contacted the military for the standard forms. That’s when they were told they were not veterans. It all came

Con’td on page 20



AUXILIARY LIAISON

Mrs. Connie Sullivan

There are times in our lives when we do things or make comments that unintentionally offend people, our friends or loved ones.

I remember a few years ago I was into making Pot Lucks at my house.

At that time I was very close to my friends because I was not as busy as I am now.

So, in order not to offend any of them, I would make two or three gatherings so none would be left out.

What I would do, was since I enjoyed making the small get together, I would invite six people at a time and that was a perfect number for me to organize the party making the exact portions of food and the exact number of gifts for the guests.

One day, for one of the Pot Lucks, just as the guests were about to arrive, one of the ladies called me and told me that she was bringing a friend of hers because her friend didn't get to go out much.

I responded by telling her that in another occasion she could bring her friend because at this point I had everything planned out and did not have enough of what I was going to serve plus not enough gifts for another person.

Well, to say the least, it did not go well with the lady and I thought she was not going to forgive me for what I had said to her.

It took a long time for that friend to come around to talking with me.

But I thanked God that she finally did because it had not been my intention to hurt her feelings.

I, however, learned a lesson from the incident and that was that in the future I would make sure that I had plenty of food for one or two extra people and plenty of gifts as well.

The matter could have gone very sour and bitter, but I kept talking to my friend and made sure that there were no hard feelings.

Forgiveness and thoughtfulness make a world of difference in our lives in order for us to feel joy and happiness.

After all that is what our Lord taught us.

MILSPOUSE SELF-CARE: OUTSOURCE HELP AND DON'T FEEL GUILTY ABOUT IT

For years, I never admitted I needed assistance managing aspects of our household or lifestyle. I was under the impression I could do it all. I always notice other dual-working parents with young children juggling work, parenting, family, and military demands and looking great doing it. How do they do it so seamlessly? Some are just that good. Others rely on family or friends. But many military families live far from reliable support. When I started to take a closer look at pain points I was feeling, outsourcing became a viable option for our family. Outsourcing alleviates the pressure of being everything to everyone, and it brings me peace of mind as the to-do list gets shorter.

I started reaching out to other working military spouses and asked what their secret was. I understand not every location will provide the same platform of services and every military family is different in terms of level of support they need or can host. With that, here are a few options to consider that were recommended or that I currently use:

Child care. As military families move

10 times more than their civilian counterparts, many have used the Child Care Aware subsidy to enroll their children in a daycare center close to their home if living off the installation. If you are choosing to live on the installation, Child Development Centers and Family Child Care providers offer full-time or hourly care. You will need to sign your children up through Militarychildcare.com as soon as you are notified you are moving and in need of this support.

With my employer's headquarters on the East Coast, I often am required to attend evening work calls and need an additional adult in the house to watch our children during the bath, dinner, and bedtime routines. The extra set of hands can be a huge help with little ones. If you're looking for a sitter, try starting on Care.com or Sittercity.com, check with your local morale, welfare and recreation office for babysitter lists, or reach out to other military families in the area.

Self-care. Investing in a healthy mind and body is a must with the commu-

nity's operational tempo. Is it possible for you to splurge for a trainer or group workout classes at a local gym or activity center? If you are in need of another opinion outside of your immediate circle on how to tackle your days and manage and mitigate stress, look to outside life coaching and therapy resources available to you at no cost. These tools empower you, set you on the right path, and validate what you are feeling. Also, in the coming weeks, our friends at In-Dependent are hosting a virtual Military Spouse Wellness summit highlighting some incredible experts who will host an "in-house" retreat experience just for you! The key to making our family function is enabling me to function. The bottom line: You need to be able to take care of yourself before taking care of everyone else.

Home care. Many military spouses stated they outsource cleaning services in their home to keep the laundry, toys, messes, sanitation, and sanity in order. What could you do with a

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ARMY NURSES CARE FOR TB PATIENTS AT FORT BAYARD NEW MEXICO

BY COL. CONSTANCE J. MOORE, USA (RET.), ARMY NURSE CORPS ASSOCIATION HISTORIAN

In 1903, after traveling by train through a sparsely-populated, barren landscape, Army nurses were delighted to find their new assignment, Fort Bayard, New Mexico, neatly landscaped with green lawns, shade trees and flowers. One nurse described it as “a very large place, comprising within its boundaries an officers’ row, a nurses’ home¹, X-ray laboratory, officers’ hospital and mess hall², two large hospital [buildings] for the enlisted men, an operating room, drug room, large dining hall and main kitchen.”³ Army nurses worked at the post’s sanatorium caring for soldiers who had contracted pulmonary tuberculosis.

Although remote, the fort had become more accessible after 1891 when a railway depot was established at the nearby town of Bayard, New Mexico. More important, at 6,100 ft. and with a dry, sunny climate, the fort lay within what proponents of climatological therapy termed the “zone of immunity.”⁴ Practicing state-of-the-art healthcare, it was believed that prolonged exposure to a favorable climate would cure tuberculosis.

Nursing care revolved around the tried and true trifecta: good food, rest and fresh air. One nurse managed the preparation of high caloric food and the serving of nutritious meals. With no concerns about cholesterol, the patients’ diet was rich in dairy products—up to three dozen eggs and 14 quarts of milk were generally consumed each week, by each patient.⁵ Fattening foods were also served as snacks between meals at 1000, 1500 and 2000 hours. Miss⁶ Hamill remembered, “We saw splendid results [weight gain] when olive oil was given in hot milk [during snack times].”⁷ Weekly, weights were required and progress noted for the physicians’ report. As a result, in one situation, a patient gained 50 pounds in 4 months.⁸

The rest protocol was strictly followed. Miss Young stated, “Patients were subject to few restrictions . . . The only requirement absolutely insisted upon [was] that they should rest for certain periods each day.”⁹ After the first and second meals, patients were required to lay down. At 1500 hours, all patients reposed until 1700 hours. Even bathing-of sorts-was accomplished in a



Nurses at the Army General Hospital, Ft. Bayard, New Mexico

recumbent position. Nurses supervised patients’ daily “sun baths” where they exposed the men’s¹⁰ chest to the sun until “copper colored.”¹¹

Patients were encouraged to be out of doors as much as possible. Miss Young stated, “They were free to roam at will through the wild country surrounding the Fort.”¹² Patients had books, music, clubs, poolrooms, polo space, and tennis courts for their enjoyment and to keep their morale up. They were advised “never to sleep in a closed room; keep at least one window open no matter what the weather.”¹³ Even the sicker ones were wheeled in their beds out on the porches of various hospital units to breath in the crisp, dry air.

The reward Army nurses most cherished was having a patient recover and be discharged to live a normal life. Without the diligent nursing care by Army nurses a far greater number of soldiers would have succumbed to this virulent disease.



Ambulant Tents and Wards

¹ Army nurses were single or widowed women, who were required to live on post.

² Separate hospital and messing facility for officers and enlisted were the norm until World War II.

³ Hamill, E.C. “The Fort Bayard Hospital for Tuberculosis,” *The American Journal of Nursing*, 18(8): 665.

⁴ Dammer, D. “Establishment of Fort Bayard Army Post,” New Mexico Office of the State Historian, file:///Users/bill/Desktop/Formation%20of%20the%20ANC/New%20Mexico%20Office%20of%20the%20State%20Historian%20-%20Fort%20Bayard.webarchive (Accessed on July 30 2012)

⁵ Delano, Jane. “The World’s War against Consumption,” *The American Journal of Nursing*, 4(6): 440.

⁶ The common form of address was “Miss” since Army nurses did not hold rank and were not allowed to marry.

⁷ Hamill, E.C. “The Fort Bayard Hospital for Tuberculosis,” *The American Journal of Nursing*, 18(8): 666.

⁸ Ibid. 666.

⁹ Young, Agnes. “Notes from Fort Bayard, New Mexico,” *The American Journal of Nursing*, 6(6): 370.

¹⁰ Patients were all men. If a nurse became ill, she would be transferred to another hospital.

¹¹ Hamill, E.C. “The Fort Bayard Hospital for Tuberculosis,” *The American Journal of Nursing*, 18(8): 666.

¹² Young, Agnes. “Notes from Fort Bayard, New Mexico,” *The American Journal of Nursing*, 6(6): 370.

¹³ Delano, Jane. “The World’s War against Consumption,” *The American Journal of Nursing*, 4(6): 442.



PERSONAL AFFAIRS

Jose Luis Hernandez

Veterans are 45 percent more likely to be self-employed than nonveterans, according to the Small Business Administration - and they have an immense impact on the U.S. economy. The most recent data reveal there is one veteran-owned firm for every 10 veterans. Veteran-owned businesses employ 5.8 million individuals.

But getting started after a successful military career might present challenges many veterans are not anticipating, says Emily McMahan, executive director of Capitol Post, a nonprofit in the Washington, D.C., area that helps veterans with entrepreneurship.

"In the military, you're not really taught to fail. Failure is not necessarily applauded or encouraged," McMahan says. "When you get into a startup and realize that you very likely are not going to succeed immediately, that's the learning point. How quickly do you turn the feedback? It's a process that is important. ... Ultimately, what counts is: How fast can you turn the process of failure into what drives people to succeed?"

Success is within reach, though. Here are seven tips for starting your own business from officers who've done it.

PLAN AHEAD

"I used the military's transition program and took all the courses they had, but I kept coming back to their Boots to Business Course. ... I started taking the courses one year out. I had a separate planner for my transition," says Lt. Col. Jenifer Breaux, USA (Ret), who owns a Dream Vacations franchise in Lithia, Fla. "When I decided that I wanted to own my own franchise, I took Boots to Business a second time and picked up additional tips. I was more focused be-



cause I made my decision."

She made a checklist and a plan.

"We plan everything in the military - why not with your business? Make a transition plan and include in it how and when your business will launch. Include details of where and how."

KEEP LEARNING

McMahan cut her teeth at defense contractor Halfaker & Associates from 2008 to 2013 before becoming the executive director of Capitol Post.

A former Army captain and veteran of Iraq and Afghanistan, McMahan advised about 90 companies in 2017, plus dozens of other veterans who have sought guidance. Many lack focus, even if they think they have a great business idea. She suggests they get some experience in a real business first - just as she did.

"I think having worked for Dawn [Halfaker], that's the reason why I'm in this role," she says. "I've seen someone who started a company and have seen her experience and my own."

FIND A MENTOR

You've taken orders from military leadership your entire career. Even though you're going into business for yourself, Breaux recommends relying on the expertise and knowledge of civilian business experts.

"You can find them at the Small Business Association, your local chamber [of commerce], etcetera. Look for them and use them. While [military officers] are used to public speaking and making slides, I did not know about a 30-second commercial, how to dress for my specific business, one-on-ones, and more. If they are good, they are willing to pay it forward," says Breaux.

ASSEMBLE A STELLAR TEAM

When you hire competent people, you overcome problems such as poor customer service, poor marketing, and poor products or services, says former Army 2nd Lt. Derrick Weaver, owner of "Mr. Transmission" in Lilburn, Ga. Weaver has been running his company on the outskirts of Atlanta since 2003.

"When I first started, I had a couple of guys who weren't good at what they did. That's not good for your reputation. Once you get over that hurdle, and customers are getting good results, they will tell other people," Weaver says.

A business specialty such as transmission repair requires a specific skill set and high-caliber performance. If you've set yourself apart as an expert in your field who does quality work, people will want to work for you, Weaver says.

"And it isn't just the technical aspect of it," Weaver continues. "You have to have people without personal problems interfering with their work - good people. My guys show up to work on time, come early, and leave late. They're honest, technical, and good at what they do."

NETWORK IN THE COMMUNITY

Former Navy Lt. Cmdr. Ed Vargas joined his local chamber of commerce to make connections. As a result, his "Mr. Appliance" franchise took off in Loudoun County, Va., and Martinsburg, W. Va. In November, he and his wife, Amy, were awarded the "People's Choice Award for Loudoun County" as the "Best Small Business." They have

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FEBRUARY 10, 2018



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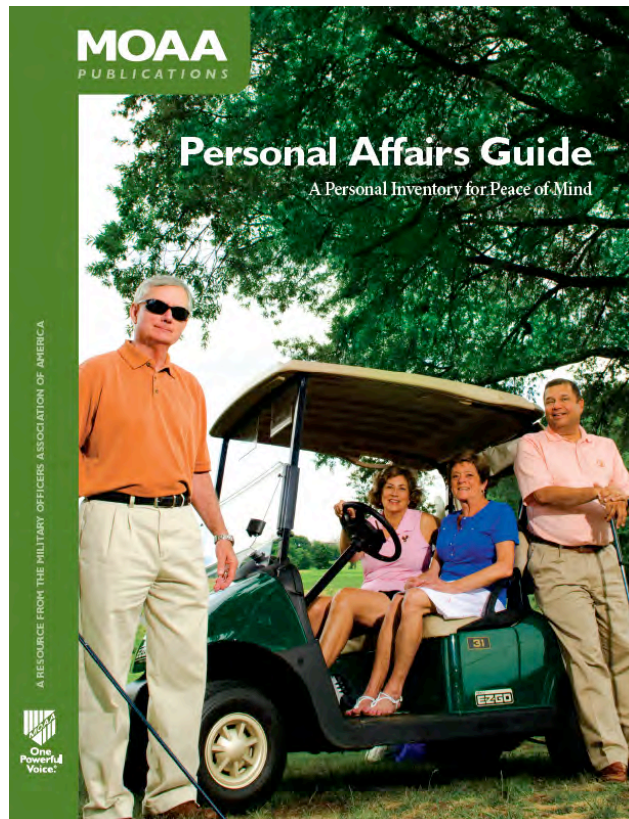
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CRSC

RETIREES DON'T MISS OUT, YOU MAY BE ELIGIBLE

Just because a veteran was not injured in combat does not mean he or she may not be entitled to receive **Combat-Related Special Compensation (CRSC)**. Many veterans may be missing out on hundreds, if not thousands, of dollars every month because they have not applied for the special compensation. Don't let the term combat throw you; there are many circumstances which are combat related that could justify approval of extra tax-free money for you.

CRSC is designed to restore military retirement pay that has been offset by Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) compensation when evidence exists to confirm the associated disabilities are combat related. For example, if a veteran is currently rated for disability of 10 percent with the VA, he or she receives a check from the VA for \$115 each month, but his or her retired pay is reduced by the same amount. If the disability is found to be combat-related by the CRSC review board, he or she would continue to receive the monthly check from the VA for \$115 along with the remainder of the retired pay, but begin to receive an additional monthly check from the CRSC for \$115.

Many disabilities that resulted from conditions during peacetime may meet the criteria for CRSC. Some examples are an aircraft mechanic who works on the flight line and begins to lose his hearing while in- service; a personnel technician who dives for cover during a simulated air raid and injures her shoulder; and a special forces journeyman who makes a peacetime parachute jump and breaks his ankle upon landing. If you're not sure the circumstances surrounding your disability meet the combat-related criteria, it would be beneficial for you to apply for CRSC and let the board make a determination for you.

You should submit a CRSC application if:

- You think you are eligible for CRSC and have never applied.
- You have been approved for CRSC, but you have more disabilities that you think might qualify.
- The VA has recently added more disabilities to your rating that you think might qualify. VA recently expanded coverage to those suffering from the following medical conditions associated with Agent Orange.

- o Ischemic Heart Disease
- o Parkinson's Disease
- o Hairy Cell Leukemia
- o other Chronic B-cell Leukemia

There are a few prerequisites to consider before submitting a CRSC application. To meet the basic eligibility criteria to be considered for CRSC, veterans must:

- Be retired with 20 (or more) years of active-duty military service, or retired at age 60 from the Guard or Reserve and
- Be receiving military retired pay and
- Have a compensable VA disability rating of 10 percent or higher and
- Receive military retired pay that is reduced by VA disability payments.

The application for Combat-Related Special Compensation can be obtained for first time applicants at <http://www.naus.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/DD2860.pdf>. If you are reapplying for new disabilities, request a reconsideration application from your service branch.

- Army: At <https://www.hrc.army.mil/site/crsc/reconsiderations.html> you can find a reconsideration application and instructions.
- Navy/Marines: At <http://www.secnv.navy.mil/mra/CORB/Pages/CRSCB> you can find a reconsideration application and instructions.
- Air Force: Call 800-525-0102 concerning reconsideration

When applying include documents you feel will help your case. These might include:

- Retirement orders
- 20-year letter or statement of service (for reservists)
- Relevant pages in your VA or service medical record
- VA ratings
- Purple Heart award citations
- Retirement Form DD214

Your branch will make decisions based on what you send. The quality of the information is more important than quantity. Send copies, not original documents. Your branch will not return them. NOTE: Veterans who waived military retirement pay for Civil Service credit are not eligible to apply for CRSC.

[Source: USVCP & <https://www.dfas.mil/retiredmilitary/disability/applyforcrcs.html> | Staff | February 23, 2018 ++]

PORT CHICAGO: 944 AMMUNITION DEPOT EXPLOSION



A. D. Hamilton, Lawrence Matthews, James Bridges, and Leroy Hughes are the names of just four of the 320 sailors that died in the Port Chicago disaster. On July 17, 1944, a massive explosion occurred at the ammunition depot of Port Chicago. It was the worst home front disaster in World War II. Over 10,000 tons of explosives detonated, sinking two ships and killing over 300 sailors, most of whom were African-American. The disaster sparked controversy. Inadequate training, hazardous conditions and irresponsible labor practices all contributed to the disaster.

Following the disaster, many of the surviving sailors felt that their commanders had not properly addressed these issues when they asked them to continue to work. In response, the sailors protested with a work stoppage. Although no violence or threat of violence occurred, the Navy viewed the work stoppage as a mutiny. In September 1944, the Navy charged 50 of the Port Chicago sailors with disobeying orders and initiating a mutiny. A court martial found them guilty in October.

The disaster at Port Chicago and its aftermath are important moments in African-American history. The events caught the attention of civil rights ac-

tivist and chief counsel of the NAACP, Thurgood Marshall. He believed that the court martial unjustly charged the sailors with mutiny. Furthermore, he called for a government investigation of the Navy's practice of assigning African-American service members to segregated support roles, as well as the unsafe conditions that the sailors worked in. Bringing national attention to these issues contributed to the executive order that desegregated the military in 1948. The legacies of the Port Chicago sailors still resonate today.

Many of the sailors that died in the Port Chicago disaster are now buried at Golden Gate National Cemetery. Last year, the Veterans Legacy Program partnered with San Francisco State University to conduct research on Veterans buried at local national cemeteries. The students and faculty created a series of short films about the stories that they discovered at Golden Gate and San Francisco National Cemeteries. One of the films highlights the Port Chicago disaster and shares the legacies that came from it. This partnership is one of the ongoing efforts to modernize the way that we memorialize Veterans. In May 2016, the National Cemetery Administration (NCA) launched the Veterans Legacy Program in order

to engage students, teachers, and the public with stories about the lives and service of Veterans. To find out more about the Veterans Legacy Program visit their website <https://www.cem.va.gov/legacy>.

NCA is proud to support local filmmakers, storytellers, and students engaging with the stories of Veterans in their local national cemeteries. They may raise issues of local interest or even controversy. It is hoped this will encourage all viewers to learn more about the Veterans and their circumstances. The views expressed by parties in the films are not those of NCA; but presented as part of the plurality of perspectives and views surrounding the life and service of American Veterans. If you would like to learn more about the Port Chicago disaster and its aftermath, read the Naval History and Heritage Command's publication found at <https://www.history.navy.mil/research/library/online-reading-room/title-list-alphabetically/p/port-chicago-ca-explosion.html>. In recognition of Black History Month, NCA is proud to share the film "Remembering Port Chicago," which can be viewed at https://youtu.be/AdoMjk_CIHs.

[Source: VAntage Point | Kenneth Holliday | February 22, 2018 ++]



CHAPLAIN CORNER

Mrs. Connie Sullivan

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MILSPOUSE SELF-CARE: OUTSOURCE HELP AND DON'T FEEL GUILTY ABOUT IT

few more hours added to your day? In addition, other ideas include a home organizer (someone who assists with decluttering and room organization), yard-work or snow-shoveling service (some companies offer these services free of charge if the servicemember is deployed!), or a local order-ahead and/or a grocery-delivery service.

Do what is best for you and your family. If there is a service that can assist you and alleviate some stress, don't feel guilty about creating a budget and discussing these options as a couple to set everyone up for success. If there are additional recommendations you have found to be useful in your household, please do not hesitate to share your secrets!

At this point, I hope you have read a little about my background and the self-care series. I hope this was helpful, and I look forward to sharing some additional tips next month!

About the Author: Christine "C.C." Gallagher is project manager, Military Spouse Programs with BAM Technologies and founder of Military Quality of Life Consulting LLC. She is the spouse of an active duty soldier and mother to two military children.

Watching the news is hard to believe that there are so many tragedies happening in our country when our own military is at war and in so much danger.

To think that the focus should be in praying for our men and women in combat instead of directing energy, time, and effort toward hatred, and violence within our own people is unreal and is not conducive to the betterment of our fellow beings.

The unity that made this country so great seems like it is vanishing. Now there is so much mourning and sorrow.

Why we are letting negativism take over, is beyond believe and understanding. Why can we not remember that we are a nation under God, as the Pledge of Allegiance states, and that we are in peril of losing the strength and common ideals that gave us the compelling force of freedom, believes and unity.

May we as a chosen country of prosperity, charity, and love turn to our Supreme Being to protect us in the times to come and may we repent of our wrong doings.

For life is short and the stakes are very high, and may God continue to Bless America.

7 TIPS FOR VETERANS WHO WANT TO START THEIR OWN BUSINESS

been running Mr. Appliance since 2015.

"We did a lot of networking within the chamber. There were a lot of realtors and other professionals that needed appliance repair and didn't know who to go to, and here I am," Vargas says. "A chamber of commerce gives you credibility and accountability. You also should join a 'lead share group' at your chamber. Basically, you're sharing leads among each other. That has helped us immensely. We've spent less in marketing than we have on networking. It adds to the bottom line."

PARTNER UP

When Breaux, the mother of two special needs boys, retired after 29 years in October 2015, she wanted to start a business in which her family "could share in the adventure." Breaux wanted a work schedule that would give her parenting flexibility and time to volunteer in her children's activities.

"One of the biggest challenges I faced was that I did not have a business background," Breaux says. But her husband, also a retired Army officer, has degrees in accounting and finance. He handles those areas of the business while she concentrates on running it - and being with their chil-

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dren, too.

ESTABLISH YOURSELF

Both Weaver and Vargas have found that people seek them out - and refer friends and family to them - because of their reputation for quality services.

When Weaver first launched Mr. Transmission, he also was selling cars full-time for six to eight months.

He left that job to concentrate on the franchise, and he started seeing higher profits. Quality work was ensured when he was onsite, working alongside his employees.

"It took eight months to a year to turn a profit. It became a difference between paying bills and making money. I put myself into the shop full-time, and it changed," Weaver says.

And Vargas' reputation for quality work has spread because he has been willing to help people with questions for free if they can solve a problem with an appliance themselves.

"We're proud that we get reviews from people, and we don't even go to their house. We help them out, and they write a good review for us online. We've seen things like, 'They care and listened to me.' Little things like that - it warms your heart," Vargas says.

By Heidi Lynn Russell, a freelance writer from Kentucky.



LEGISLATIVE

COL. Lennie Enzel

The Military Spouse Employment Act:

The Military Spouse Employment Act of 2018 legislation was introduced to remedy the challenges faced by military spouses. The key points of the bill are to encourage direct hiring of military spouses into federal agencies and DoD contract positions, to improve Installation DoD spouse employment programs, to expand child care, to increase Military OneSource benefits to one full year after separation for military service for both the service member and their immediate family, to include military spouses in transition assistance programs, and to further study the effects of change of station on military spouse employment.

DOPMA:

The Senate Armed Services Committee Subcommittee on Personnel, recently held a hearing to consider potential changes to the Defense Officer Personnel Management Act (DOPMA) that was signed into law in December 1980 and has been the guideline for officer personnel management for the services ever since.

During DOPMA's 38 years of existence, Congress achieved most of its stated goals: creating uniform promotion rates, standardizing career lengths across the services, and regulating the number of senior officers as a proportion of the force. DOPMA also created reasonable and predictable expectations regarding when an officer would be eligible for promotion.

Agent Orange:

MOAA joined other veteran advocacy groups to pressure the VA to acknowledge that those who served on ships off the coast of Vietnam were also exposed to Agent Orange. The VA refuses to recognize service on ships in bays and harbors as service within the territory of Vietnam for the purposes of presuming exposure by Agent Orange, despite scientific evidence of aerial spraying and the presence of Agent Orange in the water.

Preventing Veteran Suicide:

On 9 January, President Trump signed an executive order that will expand mental health coverage options for transitioning veterans. This executive order focuses on veterans who are at the highest suicide risk: those who recently separated from the service. The order gives the Departments of Veterans Affairs, Defense, and Homeland Security 60 days to create a "Joint Action Plan" for "seamless mental health care" to service members exiting the military. It is estimated that only half of transitioning ser-

vice members who need mental health treatment seek it - and only half who seek help actually receive adequate care. During their first year out of the service, veterans are nearly three times more likely to commit suicide than those still in uniform. Additionally, 20% of veterans returning from in Iraq and Afghanistan suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder or depression. Last year, President Trump tasked VA Secretary David Shulkin with getting the veteran suicide number to zero.

Budget:

On 12 February, President Donald Trump released the FY 2019 DoD budget request which focuses on next generation weaponry to stay ahead of our enemies, strengthening alliances and attracting new partners, and land reforming DoD for greater performance and affordability. There is also an emphasis on putting resources toward recruiting and retaining high quality personnel as well as family support initiatives. The president requested that DoD begin the 13th Quadrennial Review of Military Compensation (QRMC) to assess the adequacy of military compensation and its impact on recruiting and retention.

The Texas Legislature:

The Texas Legislature is in recess until January 2020. However, sporadic Committee meetings and Public Hearings continue.

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HELLO GIRLS

down to one word. While Navy and Marines regulations said any person could join the units, the Army was open only to men. While thousands of women served in the Navy and Marines during World War I, none were sent overseas, instead serving honorably in the United States.

But, the 223 women who volunteered for the U.S. Army Signal Corps and were sent into harm's way were all told they were actually well-paid civilian contractors, said Theres, a Gulf War veteran who earned degrees at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater and Cardinal Stritch University and now lives in Washington, D.C. "They were basically told, you didn't serve," said Cobbs. "They didn't get bonuses that every member of the armed forces at home or abroad received. It was the amount of money equivalent to buying a car. The sad thing is some experienced disability from their service, including tuberculosis, and were not allowed to get veterans benefits." Which was heartbreaking for many of the women.

Most got married and started families after they returned home and figured they would never get recognition. Van Brunt's husband died during gall bladder surgery — his business failed during the Great Depression — leaving her a widow at age 39. "When I think of what my grandmother went through during the Depression when she lost her husband and had two kids, what good that would have helped her being a veteran," said Goessling. A few of the phone operators petitioned Congress and the military for decades, repeatedly getting rebuffed until the 1970s. When President Jimmy Carter finally signed legislation in 1977 recognizing what should have been done six decades earlier — that the women were indeed veterans — there were only a few dozen Hello Girls still alive. Among them was Van Brunt, who died in 1985 in Milwaukee. One woman told her family upon hearing the news that the World War I victory medal was nice but that there was only one thing she wanted: an American flag on her coffin when she died. The remaining Hello Girls were given military burials.

[Source: Milwaukee Journal Sentinel | Meg Jones | February 12, 2018 ++]

JUNIOR ENLISTED FAMILY CENTER YMCA FOOD PANTRY

The Junior Enlisted Family Center's Food Pantry serves Fort Bliss needy families E-6 and under with non-perishable food. Presently, 1200 families are being assisted. The Food Pantry is open Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday from 12 noon until 4:00 p.m. Phone #: 915-562-6074 Approximately 150 people are helped each day.

Located in the Trading Post (old Commissary), 1717 Marshall Road, the entrance is located behind the building on the loading docks that face the Post Office. There are steps up to a door. Once you enter the doorway, immediately turn left and go down a hallway. The Family Center is straight ahead.

If a soldier is in need, the soldier must get a form from a chaplain or someone in his unit who is authorized to provide the form. Upon entering the Family Center, the soldier or spouse must provide the form and their military ID. The Pantry is dedicated to helping the truly needy families.

What can you do to help? You may take donations of non-perishable food to the Pantry during the hours they are open. Please don't leave donations on the docks as those items are often "lost." Those food items that are in



great demand are boxed macaroni and cheese, Ramen noodles, cereal, oatmeal, pasta and pasta sauce. If you have gently used furniture that you no longer want or other items such as baby strollers, a call to Kimberly or Wendy will get those unwanted items to families on Fort Bliss who need them. Furthermore, the Commissary will place a large carton near the exit for donations of non-perishable food from time to time during the year. Also, several times a year, there are brown paper sacks pre-packaged with food in the commissary which you may purchase and place in a carton near the exit.

Any help that you might provide will be greatly appreciated. Please contact Kimberly or Wendy if you have questions. Thank you.

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MILITARY RECRUITING: 75% OF AMERICANS 17 TO 24 ARE INELIGIBLE

The Trump administration's ambitious new military buildup is at risk of being hobbled before it even starts — by a dwindling pool of young Americans who are fit to serve. Nearly three-quarters of Americans age 17 to 24 are ineligible for the military due to obesity, other health problems, criminal backgrounds or lack of education, according to government data. That's a harsh reality check for the Pentagon's plan to recruit tens of thousands of new soldiers, sailors, pilots and cyber specialists over the next five years. "We all have this image in our mind of this hearty American citizen, scrappy, that can do anything," said retired Army Lt. Gen. Tom Spoehr, co-author of a new Heritage Foundation paper on the military recruiting challenge titled *The Looming National Security Crisis*. "That image we keep in our heads is no longer accurate."

"Obesity and the percentage of people overweight in the country has just skyrocketed in the last 10 to 15 years," he added in an interview. "Asthma is going up. High school graduation rates are still just barely acceptable and in some big cities they are miserable. Criminality is also not going away. We have to face the reality that these things in some cases are getting worse, not better." That's on top of a more immediate obstacle that military leaders warned about last week: A relatively low unemployment rate is already making it harder to fill the ranks, particularly for the Army, which has historically benefited when full-time jobs are harder to find in the civilian economy. "It's difficult to recruit," Ryan McCarthy, the undersecretary of the Army, told reporters. "There's 4 percent unemployment."

But increased recruitment is a key part of the administration's plan to spend billions more dollars to resharpen the United States' battlefield edge

against Russia, China and other aspiring military powers. For example, the department's new defense strategy, which was published last month and provided the framework for its new budget proposal, declared that "the U.S. must reverse recent decisions to reduce the size of the joint force and grow the force while modernizing and ensuring readiness." The new budget calls for increasing the size of the military by 25,900 people through October 2019 and by a total of 56,600 by 2023 — all mostly active-duty troops.

"In 2016, our military was the smallest it had been since before World War II," David Norquist, the top Pentagon budget official, told reporters last week in making the case for a bigger military. For starters, he said the Army plans to add 4,000 troops to reach a total of 487,500; the Navy will add 7,500 sailors for a total of 335,400; and the Air Force is seeking an additional 4,000 volunteers to reach 329,100 active-duty personnel. "This allows us to fill in units and provide key skills related to recruiting pilots, maintainers and cybersecurity experts," Norquist explained. But the military is struggling to reach its current recruiting goals. "The U.S. military is already having a hard time attracting enough qualified volunteers," according to the Heritage paper. "Of the four services, the Army has the greatest annual need. The Army anticipates problems with meeting its 2018 goal to enlist 80,000 qualified volunteers, even with increased bonuses and incentives."

The booming civilian jobs market — which ebbs and flows — is seen as the least of the military's recruiting challenges over the longer term. The bleak demographic trends among the military-age population could make filling the ranks with qualified recruits exceedingly difficult for years to come. The government estimates that 24 mil-

lion out of the 34 million people in the 17-through-24 age group are not qualified to serve. One major area of concern is education. All branches of the military require a high school diploma or General Equivalency Diploma. But while federal statistics show that about 80 percent of students achieve a degree, concerns are growing that those numbers are vastly incomplete. "Young Americans' inability to meet education qualifications highlights underlying issues in America's educational foundations, with national consequences," the Heritage paper concluded.

Crime and drugs are also a major impediment. Studies have shown that criminal histories prevent one of every 10 young adults from being able to join the military. But health problems are the clearest impediment to military service — especially the alarming number of youngsters who are overweight. "We need to increase physical fitness and better eating habits in schools," said retired Air Force Lt. Gen. Norm Seip, chairman of the Council for a Strong America, "and not get on that obesity scale that is going in the wrong direction." The council is a bipartisan foundation made up of former law enforcement leaders, retired military officers, business executives, pastors and prominent coaches and athletes "who promote solutions that ensure our next generation of Americans will be citizen-ready."

One possible solution to ease the recruiting challenge would be for the military to lower its standards for entry. "There have been efforts to look at whether you need to change basic training to accommodate the fact you have soldiers coming in that are going to take more time to develop into what you want them to be," said David Johnson, a retired Army colonel who is now

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El Paso Chapter
Military Officers Association of America (MOAA)
PO Box 6144
Fort Bliss, TX 79906-0144

April 2018 Membership Meeting & Lunch
General George Underwood Golf Complex
3200 Coe Ave., El Paso, TX 79916

Date: Saturday, 14 April 2018

Time: 11:00 AM – 2:00 PM

Guest Speaker

Brigadier General Laura L. Yeager
Commanding General, Joint Task Force North

Menu

Schnitzel
Home Fried Potatoes,
Steamed Broccoli, Cauliflower, Baby Carrots
Tossed Green Salad w/dressing, Dinner Rolls w/Butter,
Coffee, Tea and Water, and MOAA Cake



Dress: Casual

Cost: \$20.00 per person

Lunch Treasurer: treasurer@elpasomoaa.org

Membership or email queries: membership@elpasomoaa.org

Mail To: El Paso Chapter MOAA, Attn.: Treasurer, PO Box 6144, Fort Bliss, TX 79906-0144

Please fill in this acceptance slip, and return to the Treasurer by Monday, 9 April 2018 with a check for \$20 per person, the cost of the luncheon. **Late Reservations**, call Bob Pitt, 915-533-5111 or Bill Moore, 915-842-9650, by Noon, Wednesday, April 11, and pay at the door.

Lunch will be on Saturday 14 April 2018 at 11:00 a.m.

Please print guest names clearly to ensure the correct spelling on the registration listing.

I will / will not attend the lunch and there will be _____ attendees in my party.

My check for \$ ____ (\$20.00 per person) made payable to the "El Paso Chapter" is enclosed.

Name of Member: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Name(s) of Guests:

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a researcher at the government-funded Rand Corp. "If the physical quality is not what you want you are going to have to build that in." He also suggested that some people with criminal backgrounds could be allowed to serve if their offenses were minor and if a determination is made that they got onto a better path. "What is a bad apple?" he asked. "Is it habitual behavior? Does what they did when they were 14 really matter when they are 19 or 20?"

But others say lowering standards poses its own risks to national security. "The Army learned a painful lesson in 2009," Spoeher said. "We lowered the standards, we signed more waivers for people who had acts of criminality than we usually did. We paid the price. These people we let in eventually caused misconduct, were separated for dishonorable reasons more than normal soldiers. The last place that we would go is to mess with the standards." Seip agreed that cutting corners on quality to fill the ranks is shortsighted. "The folks who run the Army

Recruiting Command would say we are just getting through some of those issues that hurt our ability to do our business," he said in an interview, referring to the need to lower standards during the height of the Iraq War. "It doesn't solve the problem of how we grow the pool of eligibles."

The Pentagon will almost certainly also have to dole out more money than anticipated for signing bonuses and other financial incentives to persuade enough eligible young people to volunteer, a number of experts said. But ultimately it will come down to leadership to address what many see as a national crisis, they said. "The problem needs a team effort — at the federal level, the local level, parents, teachers, kids," said Seip, whose nonprofit includes a campaign called Mission: Readiness that is focused solely on the military recruiting challenge. "Sometimes we are finding more success at the state and local level," he said, expressing frustration with "polarization in Congress." "We can't sweep it under the rug," Seip added. "If you look at the new national security strategy, we are in a competition with other powers."

[Source: POLITICO | Bryan Bender | February 19, 2018 ++]

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