

2021 | JUNE



# THE BORDER BULLETIN

EL PASO CHAPTER OF MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA



Nationally Ranked Five-Star Chapter • MOAA Affiliate from January 23, 1956 • Our 65th Year

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# INPUT

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The advertisements that appear in this publication/website do not reflect an endorsement by MOAA or the El Paso Chapter.

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## EL PASO CHAPTER NATIONAL AWARDS

### Levels of Excellence

Runner-up

2000 and 2001

Five-Star Chapter

2001 thru 2018

Communications Award Print Newsletter

Five Star

2015, 2016, 2018, and 2019

Four Star

2017

Winner

2004, 2012, 2013 and 2014

Runner-up

2008 thru 2011

Communications Award Print Legislative Coverage

Winner

2008, 2009, 2011 and 2012

Communications Award Website

Five-Star

2015 thru 2019

Winner

2010 thru 2013

Runner-up

2009 and 2014

## Editorial Policy

MOAA national and the El Paso Chapter (a MOAA affiliate) are independent, nonprofit, and politically nonpartisan organizations.





## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

### MIKE HESTER

Hello MOAA teammates! Mike Hester here with another letter as time seems to be flying by. June already and I hope by the time you are reading this you have had an opportunity to sign up for our first face to face lunch in a long, long, time. Yes, you heard correctly, we are hosting our first face to face lunch on 5 June at the Underwood Golf Course. We will have our own Lennie Enzel as the guest speaker and although we are pulling it together as we speak, I think it will be worthwhile to have some face to face comradery (I certainly need it) and it should be a good time to catch up. However I expect to have some rust in the gears as it has been a long time but please show up if you can it should be a hoot! Good food, great people and a chance to catch up and feel human again.

By this time, I hope most of our members have been vaccinated and are finally confident enough to venture out a bit. If you are concerned about the COVID we are not judging anyone and I hope to be able to live stream our lunches in the future so folks can stay home and join in a bit of fun. From my foxhole fun is exactly what the doctor has ordered.

We have a ton of good news this time around. Two of our members were awarded the MOAA Communications Award, Bill Oseles for our Border Bulletin and Bill Moore for our electronic media. Way to go Fellas! You are both making us look very good, thanks for your hard work! Well done, if you see these guys around town, please give them a tip of the hat for their hard work on our behalf!

Some additional good news! The chapter was also awarded two MOAA national grants that we applied for last winter. We are doing the paperwork now but it looks like we will receive a \$ 2,500 grant to support MWR on post and another to assist with COVID related expenses that should give us a bit more flexibility in how we help out our community in the future. Additionally, we made some decisions regarding our scholarship program that will allow us to maintain the program far into the future and when we are all sitting at Fiddlers Green, we will be able to look down and know deserving folks of future generations can be assisted by our efforts. If you want to know more come to the June 5th lunch and we will give chapter and foundation updates.

I did not receive any volunteer nominations and by now I know I sound like a broken record but here it comes again! We need help! We are looking for a few good women and men to assist both the foundation and chapter operations. Every little bit helps and to be brutally honest I am growing concerned about the ability of the chapter and foundation to maintain future operations. Right now we have vacancies in the secretary position, marketing, recruiting, advertising. And if you just want to assist, I guarantee we can find some work that is suitable to your needs. If you are interested please give me a shout at [mikehester65@gmail.com](mailto:mikehester65@gmail.com). If you do not want to talk to me feel free to contact any of the BOD members and we will get you on the management team.

I am fired up about our June lunch I truly hope to see everyone there! I bet this June lunch is just what we need to gain some much needed momentum as it has been a hell of a year! I hope everyone had a great Memorial Day and I hope to see you on 5 June! As always proud to serve and I will see you on the high ground soon (preferably 5 June)!

Mike

PS- If you have concerns about COVID or are having trouble getting vaccinated come up on the net and we will get you squared away and pointed in the right direction.

# Our Future Scholarship Program

The MOAA Outreach Foundation Board of Directors voted in February to “partner” with the El Paso Community Foundation to establish our local El Paso MOAA Scholarship Program effective December of this year with our first Scholarship Award for the 2022 School year. Joining the El Paso Community Foundation in this effort will allow MOAA to expand our current Outreach Foundation Memorial Scholarship Program with a guarantee that once a Scholarship has been designated and funded, it will continue to be awarded each year without further MOAA Outreach Foundation funding—thus allowing us over time to achieve multiple awards with new funding. Our Scholarships will recognize the character, achievements and patriotism in similar aspects to the National MOAA Scholarship Program, but focused solely on local high-school seniors who have demonstrated selflessness in high school athletics and or other extra/co-curricular activities and who plans to pursue a two or four-year college/university or technical school degree.

Your Foundation BOD is currently developing the Scholarship Award policy and funding profile to meet our December funding Goal of \$10,000—to date we have raised over 40% of the necessary funding to initiate the new Program.

***Look for further information at our next Membership Meeting***

Our first Scholarship to be awarded through the  
El Paso Community Foundation will be the

## ***Sergeant Velton Locklear III Memorial Scholarship***

named in honor of Velton Locklear, III a 1995 graduate of Eastwood High School where he excelled in the classroom and on the football field. After briefly attending college, Sgt Locklear followed his father's footsteps into the United States Army. Velton, III was serving as an infantry sergeant in the 25th Infantry Division on his second tour of duty in Iraq when he was severely wounded when an improvised explosive device detonated near his Humvee during combat operations in Riyadh, Iraq. He would die from those injuries on Sept. 23, 2006. Sergeant Locklear was a husband, father of two sons and a dedicated soldier. He touched the lives of many in life and in death.

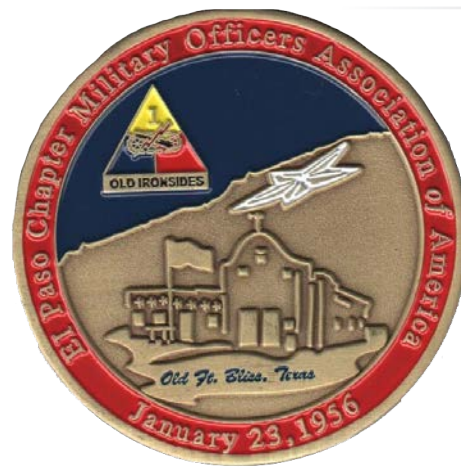
You may donate online to support the MOAA Scholarship Program at:

<https://www.elpasomoaa.org/outreachscholarship>

or

Send your donation Marked “Scholarships” to El Paso MOAA Outreach Foundation

PO Box 6144 Fort Bliss, Texas 79906-0144



## **Foundation Officers 2021**

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**Secretary** CPT David Thackston

**Treasurer** LTC Dave Powell

**Chapter Advisor** COL Mike Hester

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# JUNE GUEST SPEAKER



**LENORE S. ENZEL RN, MS, CLNC**  
**Colonel, U.S. Army (Retired)**

Lenore (Lennie) Enzel was born and raised in New York City. She received her Nursing Diploma from The Roosevelt Hospital School of Nursing in New York City; her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Hunter College-Bellevue Hospital also in New York City; and her Masters of Science in Nursing Administration from the University of Hawaii Manoa.

A retired Army Nurse Corps Officer, Ms Enzel has sixteen years of civilian and thirty years of Army nursing experience. During her military career, she was stationed at posts throughout the continental United States and Hawaii serving as a Staff Nurse, Head Nurse, Evening/Night Supervisor, Chief, Ambulatory Nursing, Chief, Nurse Recruiting Operations, Commander of an Army Medical Department Recruiting Battalion, Deputy Commander for Nursing, and Deputy Executive Director and Director, Clinical Operations at a Lead Agency. Her last assignment was as Deputy Commander, Patient Services and Nursing at William Beaumont Army Medical Center in El Paso, Texas. Following her military retirement, she was the Chief Nursing Officer at the El Paso Specialty Hospital, Acting Director of the El Paso VA Healthcare System (EPVAHCS), and the EPVAHCS Associate Director for Patient Care Services/Nurse Executive. For the past year she has been an Executive Safety Science Coach leading High Reliability Organization (HRO) implementation. She recently began teaching nursing leadership to 4th semester BSN students at Texas Tech University Health Science Center El Paso. She is a Certified Legal Nurse Consultant.

Her decorations include the Department of Defense Superior Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Meritorious Service Medal with Fourth Oak Leaf Cluster, Army Commendation Medal

with Second Oak Leaf Cluster, the Joint Service Achievement Medal, Army Achievement Medal with Second Oak Leaf Cluster, Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal (3 awards) the Joint Unit Meritorious Award, Army Superior Unit Award, and the Overseas Ribbon (3 awards).

She is a proud member of the Order of Military Medical Merit and the Order of St Barbara (ADA), serves on the Chief of Staff of the Army's Retiree Council, is Past Treasurer of the Vietnam Women's Memorial Foundation, Past President of both the El Paso Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) and the Southwest Organization of Nurse Executives (SWONE), is a recipient of the MOAA Leadership Award, is a former VNA El Paso Board member, serves on the Advisory Board for the Gayle Greve Hunt School of Nursing (TTUHSC), was Chair of the Army Nurse Corps Association Nominating Committee, is Vice President of the El Paso MOAA Outreach Foundation, and holds the highly coveted Army Surgeon General's 'A' proficiency for excellence in nursing administration.

An Affiliate of the American College of Health Care Executives, she maintains membership in American Nurses' Association, American Organization of Nurse Executives, Sigma Theta Tau, the Academy of Medical Surgical Nurses, the Military Officers Association of America, and the Association of the United States Army. She is an active member of Team Rubicon serving as a volunteer for missions they support.

She has given numerous presentations on a variety of topics including Veteran Issues, Nurse Bullying, PTSD, Case Management, Compassion Fatigue, Emergency Response, Orem's Self-Care Nursing Theory, Death and Dying, Nursing Ethics, Nursing Research, Holistic Health, and Human-Animal Bonding. She was the only nursing student selected by the University of Hawaii nominated for inclusion in the 1991 edition of 'Who's Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges'. For 2 years, she served on the American Organization of Nurse Executives Patient Care Delivery Task Force. She has also created Grief Support Teams, Human-Animal Bond Programs, Rape Crisis Support Teams, and a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) Program.

## LUNCH MENU JUNE

**Chicken Fried Steak  
w/Creamed Gravy**

**Green Bean Almondine**

**Potatoes Au Gratin**

**Dressed Green Salad;**

**Dinner Rolls with Butter**

**Coffee, Iced Tea & Water**

**MOAA Cake**

## Meeting Program

**Saturday, 5 June**  
**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, 31 May 2021**

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

or visit:

<https://www.dfas.mil/retiredmilitary>

## 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](http://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.

**Location:** 2nd Floor,  
West Hallway.

**Hours:** Mon - Fri.,  
8:00am-4:30pm;  
Except Tues.,  
9:00am-4:30pm



William Beaumont Army Medical Center

# PHARMACY NOTICE



### \*\*\*WBAMC Pharmacy Service UPDATE\*\*\*

**Service Expansion Beginning September 14th 2020**

#### Mendoza Curbside Pharmacy

Hours of Operation: 7:30am-4:00pm

#### Services Offered:

##### -24hr Drop-Off Rx Service

(SAVE A TRIP! Ask your WBAMC provider to initiate your New or Renewal Rx Request at the Mendoza Curbside Pharmacy, Rx will be ready within 24hrs (next business day) for pick-up!

##### -Acute Care Rx Same Day Pick-up (limited to certain types of medications)

##### -Tricare Online/Audio-care Prescription Refill Pick-up

#### Freedom Crossing Pharmacy

Hours of Operation: 9:30am-6:00pm

Ticket Kiosk turns off at 12:45pm for Lunch from 1:00pm-2:00pm

#### Services Offered:

##### -24hr Drop-Off Rx Service

(SAVE A TRIP! Ask your WBAMC provider to initiate your Rx Request at the Freedom Crossing Pharmacy, Rx will be ready within 24hrs (next business day) for pick-up!

##### -Acute Care Rx Same Day Pick-up (limited to certain types of medications)

##### -Tricare Online/Audio-care Prescription Refill Pick-up

**\*\*Freedom Crossing does not have curbside. We thank you for observing mask and social distancing requirements in the Freedom Crossing waiting area.\*\***

Stay Informed and Take Control of Your  
Healthcare with the WBAMC App



## Pharmacy

#### Main Pharmacy

(Bldg 7777 3rd Fl WBAMC) 5005 N Piedras St, El Paso, TX 79920.

[915-742-2793](tel:915-742-2793)

#### Freedom Crossing (PX) Pharmacy

1611 Haan Rd, Fort Bliss, TX 79906

[915-742-9017](tel:915-742-9017)

#### Soldier and Family Medical Clinic Pharmacy

2496 Ricker Rd El Paso, TX 79925.

[915-742-1802](tel:915-742-1802)

#### Mendoza Soldier Family Care Center Pharmacy

11335 Ssg Sims St, Fort Bliss, TX 79918.

[915-742-1400](tel:915-742-1400)

#### East Bliss Health and Dental Pharmacy

21227 Torch St, Biggs Field, TX 79918

[915-742-9286](tel:915-742-9286)

#### Special Drug Request

(Bldg 7777 3rd Fl WBAMC) 5005 N Piedras St, El Paso, TX 79920.

[915-742-3645](tel:915-742-3645)



## CHAPLAIN CORNER

### MRS. CONNIE SULLIVAN

There are times in life when some of us wonder why some people go through their lives with so much afflictions, challenges and trials.

It seems that it is because these are very special souls that God has particular plans for them on earth.

They are like chosen individuals that our Heavenly Father and Lord Jesus want them to experience these situations and tasks to help them acquire the knowledge and the feelings that they need to accomplish God's purposes.

And so it is, some weeks ago I had the honor of attending a Passover Seder, which I had never been to and was so delighted and impressed of how beautiful the ceremony or service was and also how very spiritually they conducted the process of the Seder.

There I met two absolutely wonderful couples. One was the gentleman that was in charge of the function and his so very sweet wife, and the other one was a Chaplain, Major William Beaver and his wonderfully kind wife, Jane.

I had the honor of sitting at the same table with Chaplain Beaver and his wife and had a marvelous time. In our conversation, I asked him if there was an experience that he had gone through where he absolutely, without a doubt, knew that it had been the hand of God that had done that miracle and not he nor his companions and if he could share it with me.

He was so kind and sent me the story



of his life and told me that his life had been a miracle in itself and that it was the Lord who had preserved and protected him from all the tribulations he had gone through.

He named his story "My Miracle Story" He said that the miracle in his life is that he survived and that he is alive today serving the Lord and that to this day, he is very close to our Supreme Being. He said he owes his life to his Savior. Three times he faced death but survived.

He was adopted and his family moved frequently due to financial and personal problems and were very poor, winding up living in the ghetto in Baltimore. He suffered the experience of seeing his mother being severely physically abused and when they moved to Florida, he went through a devastating situation where he was almost abducted from his front yard when he was a boy.

His childhood was full of sad experiences of mental and physical abuse; however his mother would let he and his step-brother go to church.

For 6 years of the first 12 years of his life, he was physically abused and beaten till he bled and was hit on the head until he would go unconscious. Once he was knocked out with a claw hammer to see how hard his head was, and all this was done by a man that did not have God in his soul. His grades in school had been solid until the after the hammer incident.

Over the years he had counseling to

deal with the trauma and even went into a social shell to protect himself because he was also bullied through 12th grade. He also experienced an incident when the same man threatened him with a gun and pulled the trigger and laughed because he forgot to load it.

On Sunday mornings, he, his mother and step-brother would sneak out to ride a bus to go to church; where he heard about how Jesus loved him and he accepted Him as his Savior at Christmas 1974. The church eventually helped them to go to another place getting away from that man to start a new life. It was then where he was adopted but lost his step-dad, Mr Beaver, in a tragic incident.

He was so determined and blessed to continue in life and attended the University of Georgia and then went into the ministry in 1985. However, dealing with the past drama, he attempted suicide and felt that he should have died in the womb, but as we know, God has the last word. Now, he, an excellent Chaplain, dedicating his life to God by helping and caring for soldiers who have been in similar families and situations is what makes him such an exceptional person, kind and full of Christ-like qualities serving his Savior with so much love is what makes this world so beautiful and it's people like him that are examples to most of us for they are our heroes

## RETIREE PAY DATES FOR 2021

## ANNUITANT PAY DATES FOR 2021

MONTH	DIRECT DEPOSIT DATES	MONTH	DIRECT DEPOSIT DATES
JANUARY	FEBRUARY 1	JANUARY	FEBRUARY 1
FEBRUARY	MARCH 1	FEBRUARY	MARCH 1
MARCH	APRIL 1	MARCH	APRIL 1
APRIL	APRIL 30	APRIL	MAY 3
MAY	JUNE 1	MAY	JUNE 1
JUNE	JULY 1	JUNE	JULY 1
JULY	JULY 30	JULY	AUGUST 2
AUGUST	SEPTEMBER 1	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER 1
SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER 1	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER 1
OCTOBER	NOVEMBER 1	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER 1
NOVEMBER	DECEMBER 1	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER 1
DECEMBER	DECEMBER 30	DECEMBER	JANUARY 3, 2022



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Armed Services YMCA – El Paso

# Junior Enlisted Family Center

• Food Pantry • No-Cost Thrift Store • Baby Project • Soldiers Kits • Volunteering

Located on the corner of Sheridan and Cassidy at  
2004 Sheridan Rd. Fort Bliss, TX



## Donations

Duration Varies

JEFC Donations: Clothing, Shoes, Accessories, Toys, Nursing, Maintenance, Media, Electronics, Seasonal, Uniforms, Household, Furniture, Appliances, Sports Gear, Hygiene, Military Gear, Crafts and Books.

Food Pantry Donations: Non Perishable foods such as – Canned Vegetables, Canned Fruits, Bagged Grains, One box meals, Canned Protein, Breakfast items and Snacks.

Baby Project: Baby Wipes, Diapers, Baby Food, Baby Cereal and Formula.

Monetary Donations: Give online: [www.asymca.org/donate-el-paso](http://www.asymca.org/donate-el-paso) Donate over the phone: (915) 263-7164 Mail a check: 7060 Comington St. El Paso, TX 79930

## Volunteering at the JEFC

Duration Varies

Offering active duty service members, military spouses and Fort Bliss Youth a positive opportunity to earn volunteer hours in their community. Volunteers can earn up to 52 hours a month during business hours to go towards school credit, promotion points or resumes.

Volunteer Requirements: - Current Physical - Must be registered in Amilia.

Ages 17 and under must be accompanied by parent or legal guardian.

To register visit: [www.asymca.org/el-paso-sign-in](http://www.asymca.org/el-paso-sign-in)

## Baby Project

Duration Varies • Free to military E6 and below

Junior Enlisted military families in need are allowed one bundle of diapers, baby wipes and up to 10 baby food items per week during hours of operation while supplies lasts.

Hours of Operation: Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday from 10:30am - 2:30pm

Location: 2004 Sheridan Rd. Fort Bliss, TX

## Emergency Food Pantry

Duration Varies

Military families in need can pick up a voucher for further assistance while visiting ACS, which can then be redeemed at our JEFC during our hours of operation.

Hours of Operation: Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and 3rd Saturday of the month from 10:30am - 2:30pm

Location: 2004 Sheridan Rd. Fort Bliss, TX

Army Community Services 2494 Ricker Road 915-568-0768

## Shopping

Duration Varies • Free to military E6 and below

Free new and gently used items to Junior Enlisted E6 and below military families in need.

-Clothing, Shoes, Accessories, Toys, Nursing, Maintenance, Media, Electronics, Seasonal, Uniforms, Household, Furniture, Appliances, Sports Gear, Baby items, Hygiene, Military Gear, Crafts and Books.

Hours of Operation: Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and 3rd Saturday from 10:30am - 2:30pm

To register visit: [www.asymca.org/el-paso-sign-in](http://www.asymca.org/el-paso-sign-in)



## LEGISLATIVE

CW2 DAVE GARCIA, USA, RETIRED

Greeting Comrades

First, I want to congratulate the chapter and team for their hard work and support in sharing tremendous information to our chapter members and supporters through our Border Bulletin /Website...The Chapter earned the MOAA 2020 Col. Marvin J. Harris Communications Five-Star Communications Award (2020) for both the Newsletter and the Website. Even through a pandemic the chapter continued its mission in fulfilling our responsibilities on informing our chapter members on important concerns and events... Great Job Team.... I would like to thank Col. David Thackson for his tremendous gift of a 2021 U.S. Congressional Directory due to being involved with legislation throughout the City of El Paso representing MOAA and DAV with other VSOs; this is a great resource and it will be used... Thanks Colonel...Again, thank you all for your support; the information on the June border bulletin is current...And please visit the National MOAA website and respond to our legislators for their support on the key bills... God Bless Dave

Join MOAA's Advocacy in Action Event. Help Us Make a Difference

By: Dana Atkins

APRIL 28, 2021

This May, our annual advocacy event on Capitol Hill will once again take place almost entirely virtually. But as this past year has proven, our membership's unified voice is as strong and

impactful as ever.

This year, we are calling our event Advocacy in Action, and we're hoping you will join us and act on behalf of tens of thousands of servicemembers, veterans, military families, and survivors.

Here are our three Advocacy in Action topics:

1. Comprehensive toxic exposure reform. Our country is still grappling to recognize and treat the long-term effects of Agent Orange on our Vietnam veterans, while service-connected illnesses from the Gulf War and Iraq and Afghanistan become ever more apparent)

2. TRICARE Young Adult coverage parity. Military kids are not transitioning to adulthood with the same health care protections as civilian families who have commercial plans — a situation worsened in the state of a pandemic.)

3. Basic Needs Allowance. This would establish a subsistence allowance for servicemembers and their families living near the poverty line. This is even more important in the pandemic environment when many military spouses are out of work. (Our board, chapter leaders, and staff have already begun the work to conduct virtual engagements with every congressional office on the Hill. But we need your engagement on these topics, which are described in detail at [MOAA.org/AiA](https://moaa.org/AiA).

Stay up to date and visit the site throughout our advocacy drive, which runs through May. Please remember our entire Government Relations staff, along with [The Military Coalition](https://militarycoalition.org) and other partners, continues to work MOAA's other legislative priorities throughout the year.

You can track developments through The MOAA Newsletter via email. This will keep you informed of the latest news and let you know when it's critical to take action. Please keep an eye

on your inbox for updates. If you are not yet receiving the weekly newsletter, please visit [MOAA.org/newsletter](https://moaa.org/newsletter) to sign up.

Your actions alongside ours at MOAA headquarters will help bring positive changes for all those serving and those who have served.

Please join us for Advocacy in Action — you make a difference.

Servicemembers Exposed to Toxins Fight Decades-Long Battle for Benefits  
APRIL 26, 2021

MOAA is urging Congress to pass comprehensive reforms on toxic exposure that would concede exposure for servicemembers deployed to Southwest Asia, expand health care to veterans exposed to airborne toxins and burn pits in that region, and increase transparency and reporting for presumptive claims. "Presumptive" indicates the VA presumes specific illnesses diagnosed in certain veterans are caused as a result of their military service.

The reforms are in a race against time as new conditions emerge and aging veterans become ill and suffer from diseases, some of them terminal.

Comprehensive reforms on toxic exposure are part of MOAA's annual advocacy campaign, Advocacy in Action. MOAA is calling for its members to reach out to legislators to support this effort.

In addition, MOAA is pushing Congress to create an advisory committee that would improve the presumptive process and expand health care enrollment for servicemembers exposed to airborne hazards and burn pits in Southwest Asia.

An advisory committee's review of



toxic exposures and recommendations for additions to the VA's presumptive exposure list could benefit thousands of veterans. Currently, diseases are added only by federal law passed by Congress or through a regulation authored by the VA secretary.

Another recommended improvement is the requirement that the VA should respond to all reports related to toxic exposure. It is not uncommon for studies linking disease to exposure to remain unanswered, leaving ill veterans in limbo for health care. For example, research is emerging that dementia may be linked to Agent Orange exposure. Under current law, however, the VA is not required to respond or act to support veterans.

#### Past and Present Exposure

Veterans have routinely reported illnesses and disabilities long after they return home from deployments, triggering a battle with the VA for health care and financial benefits. As many as 2.6 million veterans of the Vietnam War were exposed to Agent Orange, a tactical herbicide sprayed to destroy thick vegetation, according to ProPublica. The toxin has been recognized by the VA as a cause of certain presumptive diseases — a status that eliminates the burden of proof of servicemembers as they file claims for benefits — but studies linking other diseases have yet to be recognized.

During the Gulf War, as many as 250,000 veterans were exposed to a variety of hazardous materials and toxins, according to the scientific journal *Cortex*. The VA has recognized some, but not all, diseases likely linked to service in this theater.

Most recently, veterans exposed to open-air burn pits and other environmental dangers during deployments

in support of the war on terrorism are eligible to register their service with the VA. However, researchers, including VA staff, have not completed studies on hazards related to burn pits and other military environmental exposures, according to the VA.

#### Understanding Toxic Exposure Reform]

While the VA has conceded some toxic exposure, MOAA is pushing for the VA to expand concession from veterans exposed to Agent Orange during the Vietnam War to veterans exposed to toxins in Southwest Asia during the Gulf War and global war on terrorism.

It's especially important for veterans exposed to burn pits during recent wars. According to testimony from the Veterans Benefits Administration, nearly 80% of the claims of burn pit exposure filed by veterans from June 2007 to July 2020 were denied by the VA.

[The Veterans Burn Pits Exposure Recognition Act](#) would support veterans' claims by identifying countries, time periods of service, and airborne and toxic substances veterans say they were exposed to. Additionally, the bill would require the VA to provide a medical exam to determine links between medical conditions and burn pit exposure.

#### TRICARE Pharmacy Reforms: How MOAA Is Working to Improve Your Coverage

By: Karen Ruedisueli

APRIL 28, 2021

The TRICARE benefit should protect military families with comprehensive health care coverage. That is why MOAA continues efforts to improve how TRICARE deals with [Tier 4/non-covered](#) drugs.

Recently, MOAA has urged the Defense Health Agency (DHA) to re-eval-

uate Dexilant as a Tier 4 drug and has asked Congress to require an appeals process for drugs excluded from TRICARE coverage.

TRICARE used to cover all Food and Drug Administration-approved medications, placing them in one of three tiers – Generic, Brand Name and Non-Formulary – with varying copays for beneficiaries. Now, drugs the DHA categorizes as “Tier 4/non-covered” are excluded from coverage under TRICARE – they aren't covered at retail pharmacies or through the [TRICARE Pharmacy Home Delivery](#) program, and they cannot be obtained at military treatment facility (MTF) pharmacies.

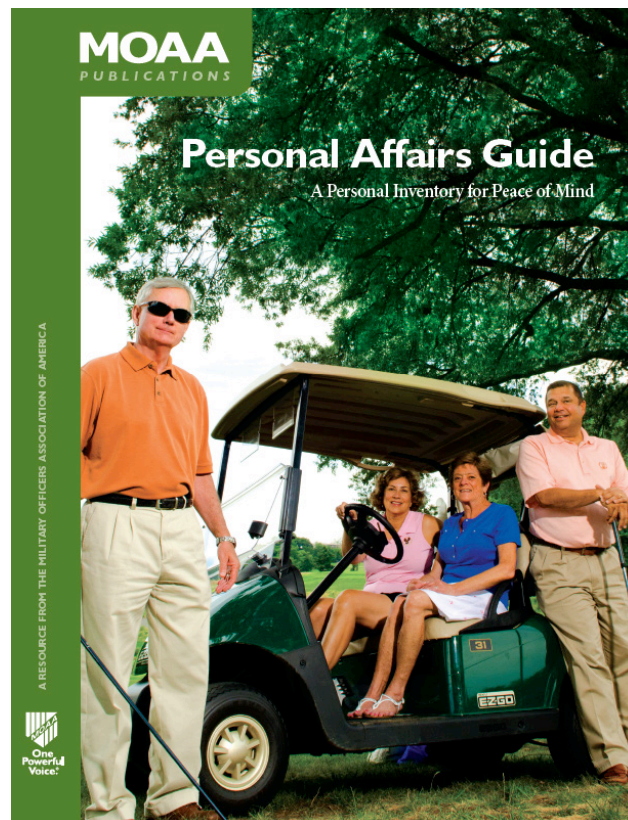
What is the [origin](#) of this TRICARE pharmacy program change? Congress included a provision in the FY 2018 National Defense Authorization Act allowing the DoD Pharmacy and Therapeutics (P&T) Committee, which resides in the DHA, to identify drugs to be excluded from TRICARE coverage. The P&T Committee may recommend, and the DHA director may approve, exclusion of a drug determined to provide very little or no clinical effectiveness.

While DHA has categorized relatively few drugs as Tier 4, MOAA believes there is already one drug – Dexilant – that has been moved to Tier 4 in a way that does not align with congressional intent to limit Tier 4 drugs to those with little to no clinical effectiveness.

Dexilant is a proton pump inhibitor indicated for the treatment of gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD) and the maintenance of healed erosive esophagitis. Approximately 19,000 TRICARE beneficiaries were taking Dexilant when it was moved to non-covered status.

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 15**

## EL PASO VA HOLDS 3RD ANNUAL BABY SHOWER TO SUPPORT EXPECTANT VETERANS (CBS4LOCAL.COM)



**Get yours today at [MOAA.ORG](http://MOAA.ORG); your family will Thank You!**





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Fort Bliss, TX 79906-0144

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*We value your privacy. MOAA does not rent or sell its members' emails to third parties. If you include your email address, you will receive e-communications from MOAA as a member benefit. Visit [www.moaa.org/email](http://www.moaa.org/email) for details.*

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\*\* Email address required for BASIC Membership

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M1300CJOIN

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**Add your own voice to the fight.**





# FORT BLISS ACCESS CONTROL POINTS

- A 100% identification card check of all personnel will be implemented at all Fort Bliss access control points.
- All Department of Defense and non-DoD vehicular occupants, including the driver and all of-age passengers, will have to present an ID card - valid state driver's license, government/federal ID card, passport, etc. - for authorized access to Fort Bliss.
- All vehicles and occupants entering Fort Bliss are subject to random searches and inspections, as has always been the standard.
- All non-DoD persons can expect to obtain a visitor's pass at certain gates with VCC (Visitor Control Centers). Travelers should plan their time accordingly as access times to Fort Bliss might be increased following these enduring security measure enhancements.

*For more detailed information on gate access and hours of operation see <https://www.bliss.army.mil/gateinfo.html>.*



## Junior Enlisted Family Center

Located at 2004 Sheridan Rd. Fort Bliss, TX 79906

No Cost Thrift Store: Closed

Food Pantry: Fridays 10:30am-2:30pm

Baby Project: Fridays 10:30am-2:30pm

JEFC drive-thru Food Pantry: Wednesdays 3-5pm

Hosted at 7060 Comington St. El Paso, TX 79930

Junior Enlisted military families in need are allowed one bundle of diapers, baby wipes and up to 10 baby food items per week during hours of operation while supplies lasts.



Since [Dexilant was moved to Tier 4](#), we have heard from numerous MOAA members and other TRICARE beneficiaries about how this decision has negatively impacted them. Most tried other prescription and non-prescription alternatives that have not worked as well as Dexilant or have left symptoms unchecked.

MOAA research suggests TRICARE's non-coverage of Dexilant is out of step with commercial plans and other government payers. According to Dexilant's manufacturer, Takeda Pharmaceuticals, Dexilant is covered by approximately 80% of commercial plans, 70% of Medicare Part D plans, 70% of fee-for-service Medicaid and 45% of managed Medicaid plans.

We have provided beneficiary feedback and coverage comparisons to DHA and urged officials to restore Dexilant to the TRICARE formulary. The P&T Committee included a reassessment of Dexilant coverage on its February 2021 [agenda](#); we are waiting to learn the results of that meeting.

### Coverage Appeals

Charges for Tier 4/non-covered drugs do not count against the [catastrophic cap](#), exposing TRICARE beneficiaries to unlimited financial risk from non-covered prescription drugs. In addition to pushing for Dexilant to be reinstated to the TRICARE formulary, we have urged Congress to require an appeals process that would allow TRICARE beneficiaries to make the case for coverage of Tier 4 drugs because of medical necessity.

We believe DHA has the authority to implement an appeals process, so legislation may not be necessary. We continue to advance this issue with DHA

and the Armed Services Committee staff in both chambers to achieve an appeals process for Tier 4 drugs.

At a minimum, TRICARE coverage should align with that of high-quality commercial plans. The extraordinary challenges and sacrifices associated with military service should earn a comprehensive health care benefit. We will continue our efforts to ensure TRICARE beneficiaries are protected from unexpected coverage gaps.

MOAA is tracking member communications on Tier 4 and using them to drive advocacy efforts. Are you taking a drug that has been moved to Tier 4/non-covered status? Please share your experience at [legis@moaa.org](mailto:legis@moaa.org).

### MOAA Key Legislation Bills

#### Federal - HR 148

A bill to provide a work opportunity tax credit for military spouses and to provide for flexible spending arrangements for childcare services for military families.

#### Federal - HR 239

A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for limitations on co-payments for contraception furnished by the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

#### Federal - HR 344

A bill to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to conduct an analysis of the need for women-specific programs that treat and rehabilitate women veterans with drug and alcohol dependency and to carry out a pilot program regarding such programs.

#### Federal - HR 475

A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to improve dependent coverage under the TRICARE Young Adult Program, and for other purposes.

#### Federal - HR 910

A bill to direct the Comptroller General of the United States to conduct reviews of certain budget requests of

the President for the medical care accounts of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

#### Federal - HR 912

A bill to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to make certain improvements relating to mental health and suicide prevention outreach to minority veterans and American Indian and Alaska Native veterans, and for other purposes.

#### Federal - HR 914

A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to furnish dental care in the same manner as any other medical service, and for other purposes.

#### Federal - HR 1012

A bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the members of the Women's Army Corps who were assigned to the 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion, known as the "Six Triple Eight."

#### Federal - HR 1276

A bill to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to furnish COVID-19 vaccines to certain individuals, and for other purposes.

#### Federal - HR 1282

A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to expand eligibility to certain military retirees for concurrent receipt of veterans' disability compensation and retired pay or combat-related special compensation, and for other purposes.

#### Federal - HR 1801

A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to increase the maximum age for children eligible for medical care under the CHAMPVA program, and for other purposes.

#### Federal - HR 1854

A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow for a credit against tax for employers of reservists.

#### Federal - HR 1972

A bill to amend title 38, United States



## DOC'S CORNER

DR. DANIEL WASHBURN.

Marketing and selling vitamins and diet supplements has become big business with nearly 100,000 products available and over \$30 billion in revenue each year. Supplements include vitamins, minerals, herbs, amino acids, enzymes and probiotics and come in various forms such as tablets, capsules, powders, liquids, gummies and energy bars. An estimated 75% of Americans consume some form of diet supplement.

One of the most common questions I am asked in my clinic is, "Should I be taking a diet supplement for my eyes?" Vitamins and nutrients are certainly critical for the healthy function of the eyes. For example, Vitamin A is

part of the biochemical reaction in our retina that allows the retina to react to light waves so we can see. However, except in rare cases, a well-balanced diet provides us with all the nutrients we need for the normal function of our eyes, so diet supplements are generally not needed.

There is one exception when diet supplements for the eyes are strongly recommended and that is if you have a condition called age-related macular degeneration or AMD. AMD commonly occurs in people over the age of 50 and the center of the retina begins to atrophy. It causes blurriness or a blind spot in the center of the vision. It has been shown that a certain diet supplement will significantly decrease the risk of some stages of AMD from progressing to the more advanced stages.

AREDS stands for age-related eye disease study. This is the clinical study that showed a diet supplement is beneficial for AMD. The diet supple-

ment for AMD should list AREDS2 on the package to ensure it contains the correct daily dose of nutrients as follows: Vitamin C 500mg, Vitamin E 180mg, Zinc 80mg, Copper 2mg, Lutein 10mg and Zeaxanthin 2mg. Preservision is the most common brand of the supplement and can be bought over-the-counter.

Use of diet supplements for other reasons besides your eyes should be discussed with your primary care provider. The following is a helpful link to provide further information on use of diet supplements: <https://www.fda.gov/consumers/consumer-updates/fda-101-dietary-supplements>.

Daniel Washburn, M.D.

Former Chief Eye Surgeon at WBAMC

Please be advised that beginning October 1, 2021, federal agencies will only accept Texas driver licenses and identification cards for official federal purposes - including air travel and entering federal facilities - provided the Texas driver license or identification card is marked REAL ID compliant. REAL ID compliance is indicated by a gold circle with an inset star located on the upper right of the driver license or identification card. For additional information regarding the REAL ID Act, please visit

Texas Department of Public Safety strongly encourages you to renew your license prior to October 1, 2021, to ensure that you have a REAL ID compliant card. If you already have a REAL ID compliant card, as indicated with a Gold Star in the upper righthand corner, you do not need to take any action before October 1, 2021.

Respectfully,  
William L. Moore  
Lieutenant Colonel,  
US Army, Retired  
Webmaster  
<http://elpasomoaa.org>



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## **SURVIVING SPOUSE LIAISON** **MRS. CONNIE SULLIVAN**

Not long ago, I talked to one of my very dear friend's husband who is an Army Pilot and in our conversation, he related his experiences of anxiety combined with the physical and spiritual strength he receives from God every time he boards on the aircraft.

For us, who have never been de-

ployed to combat or to any situation such as these gentlemen and ladies ( our soldiers ) embark on, is very difficult to comprehend the feelings of uncertainty, anguish and despair often felt by them not knowing whether they will come back to their stations safe or in a body bag.

He mentioned that everytime he went into the plane, that it was a miracle to him seeing the beautiful airplanes the Lord has allowed men to invent for such important missions.

If most of us would sometimes stop and think of these courageous men and women that leave their families with extreme sadness to go confront the adversity and to perform their duties of patriotism, we would be more grateful of their efforts and sacrifices to keep us and our country safe and

protected under God.

These experiences are surely felt by all the soldiers in whatever capacity or kind of missions they are deployed to, whether in aircraft, ships or land assignments.

We as civilians need to think more of these brave men and women who deserve our our daily prayers, for we know, for believers, that God will never leave us nor forsake us if we ask for their safe being.

When we see a soldier, any where, if we just let them know that we are praying for them we would be surprised how very grateful they are to hear those words.

May God continue to bless us, our country and especially our military.

## **CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15 | LEGISLATIVE**

Code, to expand the list of diseases associated with exposure to certain herbicide agents for which there is a presumption of service connection for veterans who served in the Republic of Vietnam to include hypertension, and for other purposes.

### **Federal - HR 1997**

A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to improve the TRICARE program for certain members of the Retired Reserve of the reserve components.

### **Federal - HR 2127**

A bill to improve the provision of health care and other benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs for veterans who were exposed to toxic substances, and for other purposes.

### **Federal - HR 2339**

A bill to amend title 37, United States Code, to establish a basic needs allowance for low-income regular members of the Armed Forces.

### **Federal - S 321**

A bill to award a Congressional Gold

Medal to the members of the Women's Army Corps who were assigned to the 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion, known as the "Six Triple Eight."

### **Federal - S 344**

A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to provide for concurrent receipt of veterans' disability compensation and retirement pay for disability retirees with fewer than 20 years of service and a combat-related disability, and for other purposes.

### **Federal - S 437**

A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to concede exposure to airborne hazards and toxins from burn pits under certain circumstances, and for other purposes.

### **Federal - S 625**

A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to eliminate the enrollment fee requirement for TRICARE Select for members of the Armed Forces who retired before January 1, 2018.

### **Federal - S 727**

A bill to amend title 38, United States

Code, to increase the maximum age for children eligible for medical care under the CHAMPVA program, and for other purposes.

### **Federal - S 829**

A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to improve the TRICARE program for certain members of the Retired Reserve of the reserve components.

### **Federal - S 927**

A bill to improve the provision of health care and other benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs for veterans who were exposed to toxic substances, and for other purposes.

### **Federal - HR 2214**

A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to direct the forgiveness or offset of an overpayment of retired pay paid to a joint account for a period after the death of the retired member of the Armed Forces.

## ***We have been busy!***

Finally, with Covid Immunizations beginning to take effect, we are seeing some of the activities returning that directly help our local Veterans, Soldiers and their families emerge from the dreary days of this last year. To help make 2021 a better time, your Foundation has made Charitable contributions to several of the local activities including:

- Jr. Enlisted Food Bank
- Girl Scout Cookie program for Deployed Soldiers
- Covid Vouchers through the Army Community Services (ACS)
- El Paso VA Drive-Through Baby Showers—63 Moms soon to be or delivered within the past year!
- Veteran's Association 2K Walk & Roll.



In addition, this month our National MOAA Grant Proposal to support Ft Bliss MWR with "Virtual Art Workshops for Soldiers and Families" was approved along with a 2<sup>nd</sup> Covid action Grant.

### **33 MOAA Affiliates Receive Community Outreach Grants**

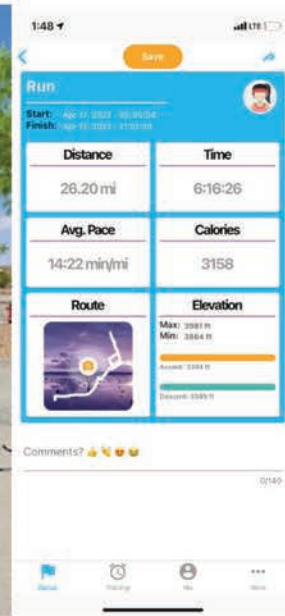
*From providing assistance to homeless veterans and supporting **art rehab therapy programs for servicemembers and their families** to sending care packages to deployed troops and giving school supplies to military children, MOAA chapters throughout the U.S. are giving back to their local military communities. This year's grant recipients are*

- ***\*El Paso (Texas) Chapter**, and 32 others*

"In total, we will receive \$3750 of the \$5000 Grant requested to provide supplies and tuition assistance for art workshops conducted for Veterans, Soldiers and Families on Post at the Art Shop. A matching Grant of \$3000 from the Soldier Art Workshops (SAW) Foundation will provide local professional artists as instructors. MWR Representatives will visit with Members at our June Members Meeting to outline how this Program will be implemented throughout 2021-2022 and bring us up to date on the difficulties facing MWR in meeting the needs of our Military with the recent funding DOD cuts in MWR programs."



**And finally to close out the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter**, we saw our sponsored Memorial Bataan Virtual Death March Team led by our Secretary, Cpt Ashley Sperry complete the full 26 Mile March representing the MOAA Outreach Foundation—**Congratulations Ashley and Team!**



### ***Please Remember it takes Volunteers to make things Work!!***

To continue our work, the Foundation is seeking additional **Volunteers** to help with our Outreach Programs—two Key Board of Director positions are open. **PRESIDENT**—we badly need a General Officer to fill this position. We have the “workers” for managing our

Programs, but have been without a President for over a year and this is affecting our ability to reach Senior Military and Community leaders who are important to the ability of our Foundation to connect with opportunities that can further the Goals of our Outreach Programs. **SECRETARY**—this month our Secretary Cpt Ashley Sperry who did such a

great job for us over the last year or so moved on to Ft Leonard Wood and a replacement who can help us with our BOD activities and has some experience with “social media” is badly needed.

***A FEW HOURS A WEEK CAN GO A LONG WAY TO MAKING OUR OUTREACH CONTINUE TO BE SUCCESSFUL.***

If you would like to join us as a Volunteer or belong to a local Veteran/Community Organization that would like to join our Ambassador Program, please contact LTC (R) John Robbins [jronyucca@outlook.com](mailto:jronyucca@outlook.com) or Cell 915 309 1891



## 2020/2021 Slate El Paso Chapter MOAA Board of Directors & Officers

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# THE BORDER BULLETIN

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