

2019 | August



2018

THE BORDER BULLETIN

EL PASO CHAPTER OF MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA



Nationally Ranked Five-Star Chapter • MOAA Affiliate from January 23, 1956 • Our 63rd Year

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INPUT deadline for October 2019 Border Bulletin 3 September 2019

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August 2019 • Vol 63 No 4

The Border Bulletin is the Official publication of the
El Paso Chapter of

The Military Officers Association of America

P.O. Box 6144, Fort Bliss, TX 79906-0144.

This bulletin is published Bi-monthly.

Subscription is included in the annual
dues of \$20.00.

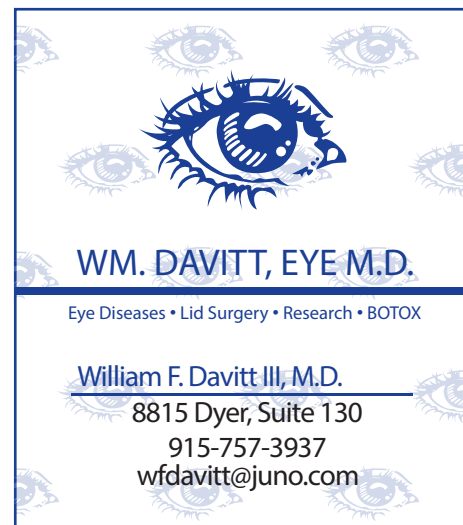
Statement of Publication

The Border Bulletin is the newsletter of the El Paso Chapter, Military Officers Association of America. It is published bi-monthly, even months, to inform the membership of issues and activities of interest to all. elpasomoaa.org is a non-profit entity within the State of Texas organized to represent the membership and to support the activities of the Texas Council of Chapters and MOAA National. Advertising contained on the website and in the newsletter and directory are not endorsed by the Chapter and does not represent any recommendation to the membership. Opinions expressed in articles contained herein are not necessarily those of the membership as a whole or the Chapter. Questions should be directed to the Editor, at the Chapter office.

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Levels of Excellence

Runner-up	2000 and 2001
Five-Star Chapter	2001 thru 2018
Communications Award Print Newsletter	
Five Star	2015, 2016, and 2018
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 2018
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

COL Forrest Smith, USA, Retired

care to retirees and their families, and military families across the nation? This is a significant issue that threatens both quality and availability of health care to those who have served their nation selflessly, and their families.

- 3.1% Pay raise. The Senate version of the NDAA includes a 3.1% pay raise, potentially the largest pay raise since 2010. For service members.

MOAA remains front and center in leading dialogue with conferees designated to discuss the above initiatives and a range of others that are included in the NDAA. Members of MOAA can continue to support this effort by contacting their Congressional leaders via the MOAA website below and make sure they understand the importance of these initiatives and their responsibility to support these service member and veteran benefits.

What are you doing? So what else can you do as a member of the El Paso active duty and retiree military community?

A. Get Informed. Understand MOAA's Top Ten Goals for the year, and track MOAA's progress in fighting for your compensation and benefits.

Stay connected to MOAA:

www.elpasomoaa.org:

www.moaa.org:

takeaction.moaa.org

www.moaa.org/linkedin;

www.facebook.com/moaa;

www.facebook.com/moaaspouse;

www.youtube.com/TheMOAAChannel

B. Get involved.

(1) Communicate directly with your political representatives. You can send elected officials your own message of support utilizing MOAA National's website, Legislative Action Center. You can also choose a MOAA-suggested message telling your elected leaders to support veteran focused legislation, especially important now as congressional leaders begin the debate on the NDAA. Your message will be pushed automatically to your House and Senate leaders. Communicate directly to your elected officials and be heard. It's easy. Go to www.moaa.org, and use their simple tools. It's easy... and it is effective.

(2) 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".

What is MOAA doing for you?

MOAA continues to tackle priority issues for Veterans. Currently, MOAA continues to advocate for several key initiatives as part of the National Defense Authorization Act continues to move through the system. Key initiatives MOAA continues to advocate for in the NDAA include:

- Repeal of the Widow's Tax, the costly offset that affects survivors and family members of deceased veterans.
- Compel more detailed review of proposed cuts to medical billets. Currently DoD plans to reduce approximately 18,000 medical billets, or approximately 1 in 5 existing billets. What is the impact to the quality and availability of health

EL PASO MOAA OUTREACH FOUNDATION

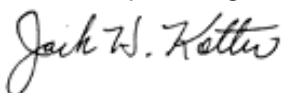
AUGUST 2019

The El Paso Chapter Outreach Foundation continues an exciting year of providing support to the elderly veterans and to the general population of area veterans. Now the Foundation has provided financial support to a new generation of possible veterans. A baby shower was supported for some 60 women with an active duty military connection and who have either given birth or will deliver during the month of July. The funds were to provide baby items such as diapers, wipes, and supplies for newborn babies. The Foundation now has provided support to the entire age spectrum of military personnel.

The Foundation has provided McDonald food coupons to the graduates of the El Paso Veterans Treatment Court graduates for the past year. The graduation ceremonies are conducted the third Wednesday of the last month in each quarter of the year. The eight veterans gave very appreciative and sometimes heart rendering remarks. They now have a new beginning with a passion to be successful in their lives with family, education, work, and community involvement. It is truly amazing the change in the lives of the graduates that this program has rendered. This opportunity for veterans who have appeared in the local courts due to some legal issue is a outstanding effort by Judges Barill and Moody along with several men who act as mentors. All of the involved personnel are volunteers. The program has the capability to treat some 50 local veterans through the program's eighteen month process. The Court provides counseling and promotes utilization of the VA entitlements that the candidates have earned. The Outreach Foundation is the only outside agency that provides this kind of support to this significant program.

Being a part of the Foundation's activities is very exciting and rewarding. All of the Chapter membership can be proud of all of the accomplishments. If you would like to be a part of this effort, there are many ways you can participate as a Board Member. Just step forward to Forrest Smith or me to join an exciting and significant effort for veterans and active duty members of our military.

Never Stop Serving!



Jack H. Kotter
BG, USA, Retired
Foundation President



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The El Paso Chapter MOAA
needs you!

You Need MOAA!
See Membership!



FREE BASIC MEMBERSHIP

(in MOAA National) to active warrant and commissioned officers dedicated to maintaining a strong national defense and to preserving the earned entitlements of members of the uniformed services, their families and survivors.

Contact the El Paso MOAA Membership Director (membership@elpasomoaa.org) for additional information.

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AUGUST GUEST SPEAKER



Veronica Escobar
Texas 16th Congressional
District in El Paso

Congresswoman Veronica Escobar proudly represents Texas' 16th Congressional District in El Paso. Rep. Escobar

She took office on January 3, 2019 as a member of the U.S. House of Representatives after making history as the first woman elected to this seat and the first of two Latinas from Texas to serve in Congress.

Congresswoman Escobar serves on the prestigious House Judiciary Committee, as well as the House Armed Services Committee. She serves in leadership positions on both the Congressional Hispanic Caucus (CHC) and

the Congressional Progressive Caucus (CPC), as the Freshman Representative and Vice Chair, respectively. She is also a member of the New Democrat Coalition, and the Democratic Women's Working Group, where she serves as Co-Chair of the Immigration Taskforce.

As a third-generation El Pasoan, Congresswoman Escobar has dedicated her life's work to improving the lives of El Pasoans. She served on the governing body for El Paso County, first as a County Commissioner and then as County Judge. When she was first elected, the County was mired in corruption that harmed the County's ability to effectively serve the residents of El Paso. Congresswoman Escobar fought back against those who used government for their own personal gain and worked with her colleagues to modernize and reform the organization. She also worked to make El Paso County a leader in expanding access to health-care by working with the University Medical Center of El Paso to build primary care clinics and to build El Paso Children's Hospital, the only children's hospital on the U.S./Mexico Border.

Congresswoman Escobar is known as being a fierce advocate for the rights of all El Paso residents. As County Judge, she helped pass a budget that included domestic partner benefits and when marriage equality become the law of the land, she worked to make sure the County was immediately ready to process those marriage certificates.

Con'td on page 7



Chapter President Colonel Forrest Smith, Host, June 2019 Membership Meeting, greets Luncheon Guest Speaker, Colonel Erik Rude, Commander, William Beaumont Army Medical Center.

Lunch Menu JUNE

Schnitzel
Green Bean Almandine
Home Fries
Tossed Green Salad, Roll & Butter
Water, Coffee, and Iced Tea
MOAA Cake

Meeting Program

**Saturday, 17 August
Centennial Club**

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, 12 August 2019**

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



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☎ 915.303.1561 **text only**

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NEW ONLINE NOTICE OF DEATH OPTION

Reporting the death of a retiree can be a difficult time for anyone. We know that many in the RSO community will assist the family with this task, and waiting on the phone to report a death can take valuable time out of your day. Therefore, DFAS has worked to correct the issues that forced the removal of the online form used to report the death of a retiree. We are pleased to report that as of March 1, 2018, the online option has been restored.

To use the online Notice of Death option, click on the link at the top of the Retired Military & Annuitants main page, which is located at <https://www.dfas.mil/retiredmilitary>. This will take you to a form where you will enter all of the pertinent information.

When reporting a retiree's death, be sure to have the following information available:

- Retiree's full name
 - Retiree's SSN
- The date of death
 - Cause of death
 - Marital status
- If married, the wedding date

The form also asks for your name, address, phone number and email address. As a third party completing this form for someone else, please use the information of the person who reported the death to you. Updates on the status of the claim will be sent to the email address pro-vided, including an email verifying that the notification was received.

William Beaumont Army Medical Center Pharmacy

New Hours of Operation Effective April 1, 2019

WBAMC — Mendoza — SFMC
Monday to Friday 7:30 am - 5:00 pm

WBAMC
Saturday 7:00 am - 3:00 pm

East Bliss
Monday to Friday 7:00 am - 4:00 pm
CLOSED FOR LUNCH 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm

+

***Freedom Crossing**
Monday to Friday 9:30 am - 6:00 pm

***REFILLS ONLY: Must be made ONLINE or by PHONE.**

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 MyHealtheVet 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.

Location: 2nd Floor, West Hallway.

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



DOC'S CORNER

Dr. Daniel Washburn

Summer is now in full swing with long days filled with sunshine in the Sun City and many hours of outdoor activities. In the last edition we discussed the importance of sunglasses to protect your eyes from harmful ultraviolet rays. Equally important is protecting your skin from the same damaging sunlight.

Skin cancer is the most common form of cancer in the U.S. Skin can begin to burn after just 15 minutes of sun exposure. Skin doctors (The American Academy of Dermatology - AAD) recommend applying sunscreen at least every 2 hours when your skin is exposed to sunlight, or after sweating, toweling off or being in the water.

There are many variations of sunscreen available, so which is the right one for you? The first thing to consider is SPF or Sun Protection Factor. SPF refers to how long it would take your skin to burn normally compared to having sunscreen on and the overall UV blocking of the sunscreen. The AAD recommends an SPF of 30 or higher.

Water resistance is another feature of sunscreen. Lotion labeled as water resistant means it will stay effective for 40 minutes while in water. Also, broad spectrum lotion blocks both UVA and UVB rays.

Along with sunscreen, you can cover your skin to protect it from sun rays. Clothing, hats and shade are all effective barriers from the sun.

Get outside this summer and enjoy the sunshine but remember to get your sunscreen on. Apply it regularly and look for lotion that is water resistant, broad spectrum and has an SPF 30 or higher.

Daniel Washburn, M.D.
Former Chief Eye Surgeon
at WBAMC

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She helped raise the minimum wage at the County to \$10.50 an hour to ensure that all County employees have a living wage, and she worked to make sure that unions had the opportunity to organize at the County and the University Medical Center of El Paso.

Too often, the U.S./Mexico Border has been maligned and denigrated to advance policy interests that harm border communities. El Paso could always count on Congresswoman Escobar to stand up and correct the record and speak to national audiences about the opportunity and vitality of the U.S./Mexico border. Her advocacy included testimony before state and federal committees and six editorials in the New York Times.

Prior to her service with El Paso County, Congresswoman Escobar was an English teacher at the University of Texas at El Paso and El Paso Community College, Communications Director for former Mayor Raymond Caballero and the Executive Director of Community Scholars, a non-profit that taught high school students how to produce public policy recommendations.

Congresswoman Escobar and her husband Michael have two children: Cristian Diego and Eloisa Isabel, and they live in Central El Paso.

Texas Driver License, REAL ID and You

Please be advised that beginning October 1, 2020, 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 <http://www.dps.texas.gov/DriverLicense/federalRealIdAct.htm>.

Texas Department of Public Safety strongly encourages you to renew your license prior to October 1, 2020, 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 right-hand corner, you do not need to take any action before October 1, 2020.

If you have any questions, please email realid@dps.texas.gov.

Fort Bliss offers Texas driver license services at 505 Pershing Ave, Room A154

Real ID frequently asked questions for the public are available here <https://www.dhs.gov/real-id-public-faqs>.





SURVIVING SPOUSE LIAISON

Mrs. Connie Sullivan

In these days of so much chaos and turmoil, some people seem to have lost their faith not only in religion but perhaps in the promise that there are good things that can come our way.

Considering all the negative things that are happening in our country,

there are still people that do believe in miracles.

Recently I went to Maryland to visit my daughter. In one of my flights coming back home, I had the pleasure of talking with a pregnant, with her first child, young woman sitting next to me. She was a beautiful person, very kind and depicted wholesome attributes and was full of enthusiasm about life. She is married to a preacher.

She related a story of an experience she had as a teenager that made her a great believer in miracles. One night, going home from a gathering with friends, the road where she was traveling was obscure, dark and very narrow. Not driving at a high speed but fast enough and not being able to see the road well, she lost control on a turn and hit a wall on a curve. The car was totally demolished on the front but miraculously she was not hurt. However,

she was extremely frightened, cold and traumatized.

A truck driver stopped to give her aid by helping her get out of the car and making sure that she called the police, ambulance and her parents. When the police arrived and asked her what had happened and who had helped her, the truck was no longer there. She and the police did not hear the truck leave even though she said that it had stopped very close to the car.

When her parents arrived, as well, and saw that she was O.K., it was bliss for them. But she knew with all her mind and heart that there had been a wonderful man that had stopped to render aid to her in such an isolated road.

Miracles do happen even if some people don't believe in them, but for us believers know that the Almighty is always at work.

THE BELOW ARTICLE IS FROM THE JULY 2019 COUNCIL AND CHAPTER NEWS— AFFILIATE.

SURVIVING SPOUSE CORNER: RESOURCES FOR CAREGIVERS

It's important caregivers also take time to care for themselves. Community resources can help with that.

By Barbara Smith, Surviving Spouse Advisory Committee member

When you learn your loved one is debilitated/terminal, your life has changed forever. It can affect you physically, emotionally, socially, and financially. Life as you knew it will never be the same.

The seven stages of a terminal illness are shock, denial, anger, bargaining, depression, testing, and finally acceptance, but they don't proceed in a linear fashion. Buckle up. It will be a bumpy ride.

A caretaker's job is challenging. The days are long, and the nights can be longer. Your life is filled with endless doctor appointments, tests, and emergency room visits. You still have bills to pay, food to prepare, sheets to change, medicines to give.

It's important to still give your loved one hope, and you must take care of yourself. Don't draw away from family and friends. Accept help. It is very important you find time for yourself to recharge your batteries, as you are no use to your loved one if you become unable to provide the care required.

The Elizabeth Dole Foundation's Hidden Heroes initiative, which has partnered with MOAA to create the Caregiver Guide, offers many community resources for military caregivers. Use home health care services, senior citizens centers, your church, your clubs, and friends. Hospitals also are good at helping you find resources for nurses, palliative care, and hospice depending on your insurance.

At the end of your journey, you will be so happy you had the time and could care for your loved one.

AIRPORT SECURITY UPDATE S.1881 | VETERANS EXPEDITED TSA SCREENING SAFE TRAVEL ACT

Disabled veterans may soon be able to bypass long airport security lines if a bill introduced in the Senate today becomes law. The bipartisan legislation would grant TSA PreCheck privileges to veterans who are blind or paralyzed, as well as veteran amputees. The service allows members to enter an expedited airport security line and pass through without removing shoes, laptops, liquids, belts and light jackets. It typically costs \$85, but qualifying veterans would get it for free — a benefit

already extended to active-duty service members and those in the National Guard and Reserves.

"Millions of veterans have sacrificed a great deal in service to our nation and returned home with service-connected disabilities," Sen. Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) said in a news release. "For those of us who rely on prosthetics and wheelchairs for mobility, air travel and passing through airport security can be a challenge." Duckworth, a former Army lieutenant colonel and Iraq vet-

eran, is herself a double amputee. She co-sponsored the Veterans Expedited TSA Screening Safe Travel Act with Sen. Todd Young (R-IN) and said the measure would make the airport experience "a little easier and less intrusive." According to the Transportation Security Administration website, TSA PreCheck is available at more than 200 airports nationwide, and the vast majority of TSA PreCheck members get

Con'td on page 13

FOUR ANC SILVER STAR RECIPIENTS HONORED

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

On March 11, 2014, in Washington DC, the US Army Foundation Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony installed four Army Nurse Corps Silver Star recipients, 1LT Mary Roberts, 2LT Elaine Roe, 2LT Virginia Rourke and 2LT Ellen Ainsworth. These nurses were the first women in the history of the military to receive the country's 3rd highest medal for gallantry in action. During the fierce German bombardment at Anzio Italy, in February 1944, they valiantly cared for the wounded and injured with cool resolve that inspired other healthcare professionals and patients.

Lieutenant Dagit who served with Roberts and Ainsworth at the 56th Evacuation Hospital recalled, "No one escaped the feeling of desperation that hung over the beachhead. The Germans had a massive troop build-up [that was] ready to launch a counterattack against our infantry. . . . Officials made plans to evacuate the nurses and later dropped [that idea.] [The leadership] determined that our presence

was a morale factor for the wounded. . . . Shelling came day and night without warning. Air raids came most often at night."¹ "The Germans gleefully pounded them unceasingly with artillery of every kind. . . . [As a result] the Allies suffered 19,000 casualties."² It seemed that the Germans used the Red Cross on the tents as a bull's eye rather than a sign of refuge for noncombatants and injured personnel!

On February 10th, during one of the worst shellings, First Lieutenant Roberts, Chief Nurse of the Operating Room, kept three surgical theaters open for the wounded. When the surgical tent received a direct hit, equipment was damaged and two corpsmen were wounded by shell fragments. Despite the damage and the injuries of the staff, she encouraged her nurses not to curtail surgeries. Her composure and dedication ensured the sustainment of the vital operating room services.³ Meanwhile, Second Lieutenant Ainsworth was working the night shift on the Sur-

gical Ward where she directed that patients be placed on the floor. None of the patients were harmed, but Ainsworth sustained a chest wound that ultimately took her life six days later.⁴

At the same time, the Germans also vigorously bombed the 33rd Field Hospital. Second Lieutenant Roe worked in the postoperative tent and Second Lieutenant Rourke was assigned to a ward tent.⁵ There was no electricity so the nurses used flashlights as they walked around the units to care for the injured, and to calm the concerns of the fearful. When given the order to evacuate the patients, they calmly helped evacuate 42 patients.⁶ Their "quick thinking, and competence [during] an unnerving situation . . . prevented confusion and were an inspiration to the enlisted men working under their supervision."⁷

These four women illuminate the ethos of Army nursing—when called upon, no matter where or when, their focus is on the health and welfare of their patients.

AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS



Three army nurses receive the Silver Star for gallantry. (l-r): 1LT May Roberts, 2LT Elaine Roe and 2LT Rita Rourke



Destruction from German Bombings

¹ Avis Dagit Schorer, *A Half-Acre of Hell: A Combat Nurse in World War II* (Lakeview MN: Galde Press, Inc., 2002), 150.

² Thomas Turner, "Texans at Bloody Rapido and an Angel," Waco History Project (n.d.) <http://wacohistoryproject.org/Moments/nurseroberts.html> (Accessed March 16, 2014).

³ _____, General Orders, Headquarters, VI Corps, No. 4 (February 18, 1944).

⁴ _____, "Lt Ellen Ainsworth Dies of Wounds," Shawano Leader, March 13, 1944.

⁵ Daniel De Luce, "On the Anzio Beachhead," Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, (February 23, 1944).

⁶ _____, General Orders, Headquarters, VI Corps, No. 4 (February 18, 1944).

⁷ Ibid.



**2019
EL PASO
CHAPTER
MOAA
EVENTS
SCHEDULE**

AUGUST 17	AUGUST MEMBERSHIP MEETING AND LUNCHEON
SEPTEMBER 19	POLISH-AMERICAN BROTHERHOOD IN ARMS EXHIBIT
TBA SEPTEMBER	RETIREE APPRECIATION WEEK ACTIVITIES
SEPTEMBER 28	RETIREE APPRECIATION DAY
OCTOBER 12	OCTOBER MEMBERSHIP MEETING AND LUNCHEON
NOVEMBER 28	THANKSGIVING



JUNE 2019 LUNCHEON





PERSONAL AFFAIRS

Jose Luis Hernandez

MOAA recently participated in a panel discussion for mid-career professionals taking an executive leadership course in the Masters of International Service Program at American University in Washington, D.C. And even if your career path veers far from that particular field, you may benefit from some of the insights shared at the event.

Many of the participants were currently serving military members or veterans in transition who were enhancing their marketability for their civilian careers in the public, private, or nonprofit sectors. The course not only afforded them an opportunity to strengthen their academic and educational credentials, but also served as a tremendous networking opportunity to grow and expand their network beyond their traditional areas of interest.

[RELATED: MOAA's Transition and Career Center]

Speaking with former colleagues,

SEEKING CAREER ADVICE?

GET EXPERT TIPS ON IMPROVING YOUR PROSPECTS

getting insights from mentors, and availing yourself to career assessment tools can help you think through what might be the best career path for you. The expert panel shared some sound advice for international relations professionals to better analyze their options and choices for opportunities in this job sector; whether you're in that field or just looking to improve your professional prospects, you'll benefit from reading some key takeaways from their discussion.

What can you learn if you're not in international relations? The piece includes tips about business relationships and self-assessment that apply to every professional, regardless of career field. When giving the opportunity to participate in similar panel discussions, no matter the specialty, here are some insightful questions to ask:

- How can I get into this field?
- What skills, functions, or certifications are required for this type of work?
- What professional organizations are worth joining?
- What does a typical career path look like in this field?
- What is the general salary range for someone with my background and skills?
- What should I emphasize in my re-

sume?

- What major challenges or opportunities does the industry (or sector) face?

Want to build some business relationships? We cordially invite you to join us at the MOAA Military and Veteran Career Networking Forum and Hiring Event on Sept. 19 at the National Smithsonian Air & Space Museum in Washington D.C.

By: Col. Brian D. Anderson, USAF (Ret.), Senior Director, Career Transition & Member



FERES DOCTRINE UPDATE 17

DEFENSE BILL AMENDMENT WOULD ALLOW MEDICAL CLAIMS

A senator has taken up the cause to negate a controversial court ruling that bars service members from suing the federal government in cases of medical malpractice by military doctors. Sen. John Kennedy (R-LA) has introduced an amendment to the Senate's proposed defense policy bill that would allow military personnel to file claims for injury or death caused by improper medical or dental care or during research studies at a military medical facility. Troops are prevented from suing the federal gov-

ernment for injuries deemed incidental to military service, including medical malpractice, under a 1950 court ruling, *Feres v. United States*. In that case, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that service members fall under an exception to the Federal Tort Claims Act -- the law that allows citizens to sue the government.

Kennedy's amendment mirrors similar legislation introduced in April in the House, which seeks to exempt medical negligence or wrongful acts by military physicians from the ruling, commonly

referred to as the Feres doctrine. Under the proposed amendment, troops and their families would be allowed to sue, except in cases of care rendered at battalion aid stations, in combat or at a field facility in a combat zone. The Senate plans to debate the defense bill this week; whether any amendments will be considered and included in the final draft has not been announced. In past years, fewer than a handful of amendments have received a roll call vote.

In the House, Rep. Jackie Speier (D-CA) has sponsored the Sgt. First

Con'td on page 13

Class Richard Stayskal Military Medical Accountability Act, named for an Army Green Beret and former Marine who has terminal lung cancer and whose military doctors failed to follow up on a suspicious mass found during a pre-training medical screening. Speier said the legislation, which has been forwarded to the House Judiciary Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights, and Civil Liberties, is needed because the Feres ruling has "deprived troops of their legal rights."

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled in three separate cases in 1950 that the Federal Tort Claims Act, the law that permits citizens sue the government for wrongdoings by federal employees or agencies, does not apply to most service members for injuries resulting from the negligence of other military personnel. The justices said the ruling was needed to ensure that Congress was not "burdened with private bills on behalf of military and naval personnel." Critics have argued, however, that the compensation package provided to troops or their families following a major medical error in a U.S. military medical facility is not sufficient to care

for severely injured or ill personnel or their families in cases of death.

Speier's proposed legislation was the first introduced in nearly a decade challenging Feres in medical malpractice cases. Rep. Maurice Hinchey, a New York Democrat who passed away in 2017 after serving in Congress for 20 years, introduced the Carmelo Rodriguez Military Medical Accountability Act in 2010. The bill was named for a Marine sergeant who died at age 29 in 2007 from melanoma. His military doctors found an unusual growth and labeled it in Rodriguez's records as a melanoma, but never told him and didn't treat it.

Last month, the U.S. Supreme Court decided against hearing a case that challenged the legitimacy of the Feres ruling. In similar cases during the past several decades, the justices have said that Congress needed to change the law if it wanted troops to have the right to sue. As with the House bill, Kennedy's amendment would apply to claims pending on the date the bill becomes law and any claims arising after the bill is signed.

[Source: Military.com | Patricia Kime | 18 Jun 2019 ++]

AIRPORT SECURITY UPDATE

S.1881 | VETERANS EXPEDITED TSA SCREENING SAFE TRAVEL ACT

through security in five minutes or less. Under the legislation, the Department of Veterans Affairs would be required to certify that a veteran is eligible for the benefit. Veterans who successfully pass a background check and interview with TSA would be granted TSA PreCheck at no cost. The legislation is supported by veterans advocacy groups, such as the Wounded Warrior Project, Disabled American Veterans, and the American Legion, but must first gain the approval of the Senate, House of Representatives and President Trump before becoming law.

[Source: MilitaryTimes | Natalie Gross | June 20, 2019 ++]

RETIREE PAY DATES FOR 2019

ANNUITANT PAY DATES FOR 2019

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	MAY 1	APRIL	MAY 1
MAY	MAY 31	MAY	JUNE 3
JUNE	JULY 1	JUNE	JULY 1
JULY	AUGUST 1	JULY	AUGUST 1
AUGUST	AUGUST 30	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER 3
SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER 1	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER 1
OCTOBER	NOVEMBER 1	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER 1
NOVEMBER	NOVEMBER 29	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER 2
DECEMBER	DECEMBER 31	DECEMBER	JANUARY 2, 2020



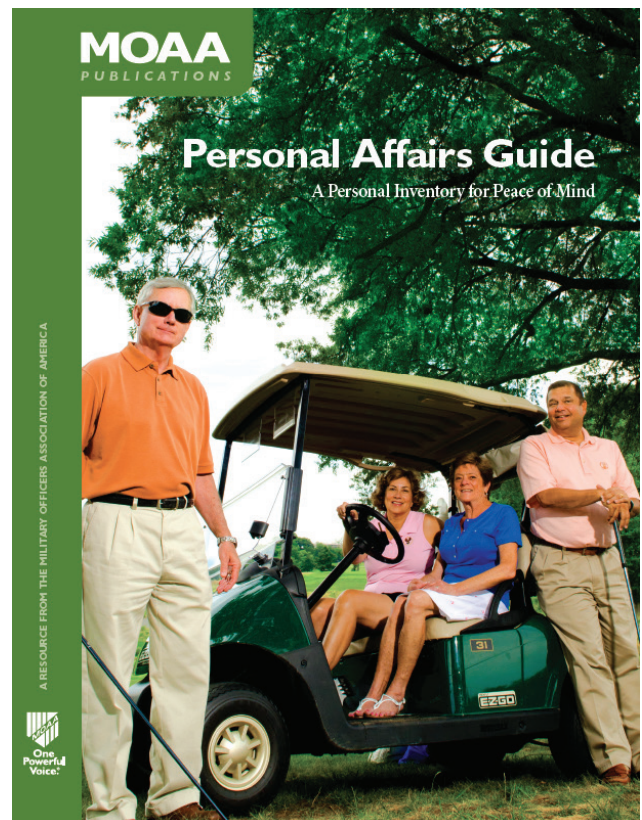
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El Paso Chapter
Military Officers Association of America (MOAA)
PO Box 6144
Fort Bliss, TX 79906-0144

August 2019 Membership Meeting & Lunch Centennial Banquet and Conference Center 11199 Sergeant E. Churchill St., Fort Bliss, TX 79916

Date: Saturday, 17 August 2019

Time: 11:00 AM – 2:00 PM

Guest Speaker

Representative Veronica Escobar
Texas— 16th Congressional District



Menu

Schnitzel
Green Bean Almandine
Home Fries
Tossed Green Salad w/dressing, Dinner Rolls w/Butter,
Coffee, Iced 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, 12 August 2019 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, August 14, and pay at the door.

Lunch will be on Saturday, 17 August 2019 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:



CHAPLAIN CORNER

Mrs. Connie Sullivan

When our soldiers are deployed to a war zone or combat, some go with the assurance that their fellow troops will be there for them if anything happens. Others go with a strong believe that God will look after them, protecting them while in those dangerous and unknown places.

In civilian life it's somewhat the same. Most citizens who are true believers in our patriotism, know that if someone needs help that we should extend our hand to render aid when

possible.

One day when I was in Maryland with my daughter, my son-in-law, Wonde, asked me if I needed to go to a store that he would gladly take me. So, I thanked him and said that I did need to go to a certain place.

On our way there, looking out the window of the car admiring the beautiful scenery, I saw a couple outside a front door of a house. The woman had her head on the man's chest and looked like she was in a lot of pain and seemed to be crying. I immediately told my son-in-law to turn around and stop and he asked me if I was sure. I replied that I was certain.

When we stopped, I asked the lady if she was O.K. and she said that her husband had accidentally closed the door on her arm and that she had severe pain. I asked her if I could help her in anyway and the both were very appreciative and said that she was going to be alright because it seems that she had not broken anything. They both as well seemed to have been extremely grateful that I had taken the time to stop and check to see what had happened.

When I went back to the car, my

son-in-law was astonished that I had done that. He, being a wonderful kind and caring person, was worried about me not knowing those people but they turned out to be amazingly nice. Then I said to him, Son, because I call him son, what if the lady had been having a heart attack and her husband had not had his phone with him. The possibility that if indeed she might have had heart problems, she probably would not have made it to the hospital if her husband had not had a means of communication. I said there is always a way to help someone if the opportunity arises.

With our soldiers it's the same way. They are there for each other because in war or combat they are each other's brothers and sisters and rely on their strengths and abilities to pull their fellow buddies through the dire situations they encounter.

In civilian life it is also the same, for those of us that feel that our country, under God as Americans, still have morals that govern our feelings of compassion as citizens to be there for each other, for that is the true meaning of a true Patriot of the United States of America.

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 #: 915-562-8462 ext.351 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 Hanna Okura, Program Director, 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 Hannah Okura if you have questions. Thank you.



NEW MEMBERS

Mr. Wonde Desalegn
Mr. Carlos Ramirez

RENEWALS

CW2 Theodore Swager
CW3 Emmett Wofford
CW4 George Patt
LTC Tu Nguyen
COL John McIlhenny
CW4 Edward Zukauskas
Mrs. Ann Parker



LEGISLATIVE

CW2 Dave Garcia, USA, Retired

Greeting Comrades, Well, we have great news Justice prevail with all the hard work of MOAA and other Veteran Organizations advocating For HR.299 Vietnam Blue Water Navy Bill that will benefits those sailors that were exposed to the Toxic chemical of Agent Orange... was signed By President Trump...It's time like this that every member should thank our elective officials for their support...

President Trump Signs Blue Water Navy Benefits Bill

Long-sought legislation that will extend disability benefits to about 90,000 veterans who served off Vietnam's coast during the war was signed into law June 25 by President Donald Trump.

The Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act of 2019 will extend the presumption of exposure to toxic defoliants such as Agent Orange to these servicemembers, which will allow them to receive care for types of cancer and other illnesses linked to these chemicals. MOAA and other veteran service organizations, including Disabled American Veterans, Veterans of Foreign Wars, the American Legion, and the Fleet Reserve Association, have championed the bill, which failed to clear Congress in previous sessions. This is great news and rectifies literally decades of oversight to tens of thousands of veterans who have been denied of the appropriate medical care and compensation from their exposure to toxic chemicals during combat operations," said MOAA President and CEO Lt. Gen. Dana T. Atkins, USAF (Ret). "Hopefully, this sets the stage for future considerations of toxic chemical exposure and mandates both effective documentation and treatment for those

service members exposed to these dangers."

The legislation passed the House on May 14 and the Senate on June 12. In January, a Federal Circuit court ruling granted presumptive exposure to Blue Water Navy veterans who served within the territorial waters of Vietnam; a motion in a separate court case, filed between the House and Senate votes, confirmed the VA would not appeal that ruling. The act includes coordinates that define "offshore of Vietnam" for the purposes of the benefit. It also extends benefits to veterans exposed to Agent Orange on the Korean DMZ, and it expands benefits to those suffering from spina bifida who had a parent who served in Thailand during the Vietnam war. These groups were not covered by the court ruling. VA Secretary Robert Wilkie recently told a Senate committee that the VA began processing benefit claims from Blue Water Navy veterans before the legislation passed, according to Military Times.

Federal Legislative Update

This month, I offered two amendments presented by Congresswoman Escobar, both of which passed unanimously, to bills geared toward improving the everyday lives of El Pasoans.

H.R. 987, the Strengthening Health Care and Lowering Prescription Drug Costs Act, contained solutions to both increase generic drug competition and bolster the Affordable Care Act. My amendment would require Navigator programs, which help Americans find suitable health care plans, to assist individuals with limited English proficiency and chronic illnesses. This will ensure that no El Pasoan is left behind as we look to expand access to affordable, quality healthcare.

H.R. 1500, the Consumers First Act, would restore and protect the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB). My amendment would direct CFPB to appoint representatives of military- and veteran-serving financial institutions to its advisory committees. This will ensure El Paso service members and veterans have a voice at the table while CFPB is strengthening consumer protections. In addition to these amendments, I introduced **H.R. 2759, the Department of Defense (DoD)**

Climate Resiliency and Readiness Act. Climate change is one of the most pressing national security threats our country faces. My bill would require DoD to adapt its infrastructure and operations to address climate change and improve energy efficiency in order to strengthen military readiness.

Veterans' bill that Congresswoman Escobar supported by co-sponsor... All Passed by Voice Vote

HR 2359, Whole Veteran Act, this bill requires VA to submit to Congress a report that include analysis of the accessibility and availability of services.

HR 1812, Vet Center Eligibility Expansion Act, this bill expands access to the Dept. VA Vets Centers to members of the National Guard and Coast Guard who have been called to active service.

HR 2333, Support for Suicide Prevention Coordinators Act, this bill directs the US Comptroller General to conduct assessment of the responsibilities, workload and vacancy rates of the Dept. of VA suicide prevention coordinator, and other purposes.

HR 1200, Veterans' Compensation Cost of living Adjustment Act of 2019, this bill increases, effective December 1, 2019, the rate of compensation for veterans' with service connected disabilities and rate for DIC for survivors of certain disabled veterans.

And others bills...HR 1947, HR 2326, HR 2340, HR 2372 and HR 2045.

HB 4429

Author: Blanco

Sponsor: Menéndez

Last Action: 06/14/2019

E Effective on 9/1/19

Caption: Relating to mental health first aid training for veterans and immediate family members of veterans.

HCR 148

Author: Landgraf | Flynn | Miller | Tinderholt | Blanco

Sponsor: Campbell

Last Action: 06/14/2019

E Signed by the Governor

Caption: Designating June as Veteran Suicide and PTSD Awareness Month for a 10-year period beginning in 2019.

TEXAS STATE LEGISLATIVE REPORT: PROPERTY TAX RELIEF 2019

The Texas Legislature is now in session and we are beginning to have new committee chairs and members getting themselves oriented to the tasks at hand. The Governor, Lt. Governor and House Speaker are intent on giving property tax relief while at the same time they are in dire need of new revenue for funding of public education. In addition, they are aware of the Hurricane Harvey relief that also needs a great deal of money. There is also some talk of getting into the "Rainy day" funds to take care of some of these issues.

The Texas Coalition of Veterans Organizations, of which I am the Chairman and of which TCC is a member, held its bi-annual meeting on January 26, 2019. The major issue that TCVO will direct focus will be the changes necessary to the current property tax law for disabled veterans with under 100% disability. At present, this is a fixed amount that is entirely dependent on the level of disability of the veteran. TCVO wants to change the property tax application to a percentage which would adjust the amount of exemption based up the percentage of disability rating to the value of the veteran's home. If passed, it would initiate a change to the Texas Constitutional which does require a public vote. However, it would solve the problems created as home values of homes fluctuate now and into the future. TCVO's top priority is this property tax reduction for all Veterans disabled less than 100%. The challenge is that this significantly impacts the state and county finances. Jim Brennan, TCVO Legislative Director, expects that by the end

of March or early April the direction of these financial issues will be clearer. We can then determine the direction that TCVO will take to promote property tax reduction for Veterans disabled less than 100%.

Sam Wilder, Association of the US Army and TCC Federal Legislative Affairs, is pressing for an alternate bill which would be only a partial solution for disabled veterans with 80-99% disability. House Bill HB 716 would provide 80% to 99% Disabled Veterans with property tax exemption based on their % of VA disability rating. TCC voted last year to accept a position paper supporting this legislation. Sam is continuing to solicit support from the various state-wide veteran organizations in support of this bill.

While TCVO and I will lend support to any bill coming before the legislature benefiting veterans, my opinion, having dealt with the legislature for many years, is that we should not be looking for an incremental solution but rather focus on all efforts into a full solution for ALL disabled veterans. My fear is that going for a partial solution will generate "veteran's" fatigue that will make it much harder for us to get a comprehensive bill passed in the end. Remember that any change will require Texas voters to approve any change. This fatigue will come if they see multiple bills for approval rather than a single comprehensive bill. TCVO will work with legislators to develop the optimal solution that will benefit all veterans disabled less than 100%.

Jim Cunningham, TCC State Legislative VP

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