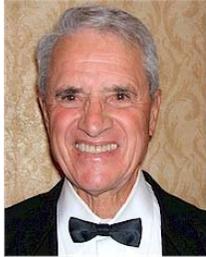




# MOAA REPORTER

## FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

BILL LAVALLEE [valleone@sbcglobal.net](mailto:valleone@sbcglobal.net)



### EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

It may be just better news reporting but it appears that we have recently been having especially frequent disasters of one kind or another in our country. (No, I am not referring to our ongoing electoral campaigns!) We have seen flooding of lakes, rivers, roads and houses right here in Texas. We were previously better known for our droughts than for excessive wetness! Also, tornados are certainly a potential problem for us here in North Texas. Then there are the wildfires, more commonly occurring in the far west. California seems to be the most frequent target.

Civil disobedience and rioting with attendant looting and burning of homes and businesses has been generally limited to major Northern cities. The bygone days of bomb shelters, "duck and cover" training and enemy air raid warnings have receded since the end of the cold war but they may rear their ugly head once again if the drive toward nuclear proliferation continues unabated. (e.g. North Korea and Iran) We may also expect local regional responses to these threats. (Some reports indicate that Saudi Arabia has already purchased a couple of nuclear weapons from Pakistan if they are needed to match the Iranians.)

So what do all these potential disasters have to do with our Chapter and its members? I submit that it is appropriate for us to think about having an emergency plan and an allied emergency stocking for our homes. Several religions recommend having such a "stash". The federal Emergency Management Authority (FEMA) also has a recommended list of items that households should accumulate to prepare for emergencies. I'll provide an abbreviated list from their recommendations at the end of this article.

First it is wise to have a tactical plan for what you and your family should do if any such emergency comes to your neighborhood. You, of course, should have designated a "safe room" in your house to retire to if a tornado threat becomes imminent. The occupants of your house should have an exit plan for leaving every room of the house and, even leaving the neighborhood, in case of severe flooding or fire. If there are family members with mobility problems, this should be factored into your planning. Knowing some first aid and CPR procedures are valuable skills for your family members.

*President's article continued on Page 2*

### MOAA-GDC receives 2015 Five-Star Level of Excellence Award

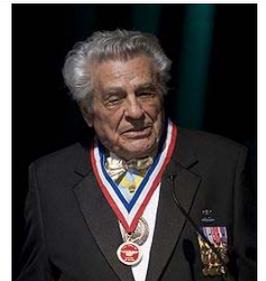


### UPCOMING EVENTS:

**LUNCHEON MEETING**  
**AUGUST 23, 2016**

**James Megellas**  
**Lt. Col. US Army (Retired)**

Page 3 for more details.



### DALLAS ALL VETERANS JOB FAIR

**August 25, 2016 — 11:00 AM – 3:00 PM**  
**Hurst, TX**

See Page 8 for more details for this event and for Virtual Job Fairs.

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

**The next Executive Committee Meeting will be**  
**September 17.**

See Page 8 for more details

### 2016 TCC MEETINGS

**The next TCC meeting in 2016 is**  
**October 21-22.**

### LUNCHEON MEETING — OCTOBER 25, 2016

**Col. Miguel Howe, USA, Ret. Director of**  
**Service Initiative at the President George W.**  
**Bush Library. See Page 5 for more details**

### SMILE FOR TODAY

**Funny; I don't remember being absent-minded!**

**Whales swim all day; drink nothing but water and**  
**eat fish; yet they are fat!**

## PRESIDENT'S ARTICLE (CONTINUED) BY BILL LAVALLEE

Your plan should include when and how to notify your neighbors and emergency personnel of your evacuation; shutting off electricity and gas before leaving is another useful and reasonable step. Be sure to let designated family members or friends outside your local area know that you are evacuating and where you are going. Others to be notified are the police, neighbors and any Home Owners Association. Your evacuation plan should have a "meeting place" outside your home where everyone in your family will gather. Also decide who will be responsible for the family pet.

FEMA suggested list of items to stockpile includes the following:

- ◆ Bottled water-one gallon per person per day.
- ◆ Non-perishable canned food: a three-day supply. (Stock a can opener too!)
- ◆ First aid supplies: gauze pads, bandages, gloves, ointments and your personal medicines
- ◆ Paper or plastic plates and utensils.
- ◆ Candles and matches
- ◆ Large plastic garbage bags.
- ◆ Soap, towelettes, toilet paper.
- ◆ Battery powered radio, flashlight (with fresh batteries).
- ◆ A change of clothing, sleeping bags, blankets.
- ◆ Useful tools; pliers, duct tape, etc.
- ◆ Family records, personal papers
- ◆ Emergency cash.



This is not an exhaustive list of actions that could be taken, but it should start you thinking of those things that you can do now, not when the emergency occurs.

As my aviation training taught me: "The best time to know Emergency Procedures and the worst time to learn them is during an emergency!"

## CHAPLAIN'S CORNER BY DOTTIE ALDER



### Busybody

Have you ever known anyone who started so many projects, and never finished anything? That's me. I'm still working on being a good pianist. I have a canvas on the easel that is almost finished, and it will be so pretty if it is ever finished, but there are so many little jobs to do. There are cross stitched pieces to finish, and when they are done, they will be so pretty.

I sat down to look over next Sunday's bible lesson to teach. Then I thought about a little place by the patio that is an eye sore, so I went out and sprayed it to kill the weeds to put mulch on it. That took two days. The mulch is still in the garage.

I worked on cross stitching today. I finished a big Santa I started 15 years ago in Wycliff, Colorado. We went there once a year for a bible retreat. The men would hike through the woods, and the ladies would sit around a large fireplace, and cut out and sew Christmas projects. That is when I started my big Santa. I said I'm going to finish this by Christmas and Phyllis said which Christmas? I will call her and tell her it is finished, but I know she will want to know when I will get it framed.

Monday is another week and I am going to visit a geek about my wireless computer. I do what it says do, but it says it is wrong. I know it hates me.

When I finish this I'm going to bake some blueberry muffins. After they are tasted to be sure they are good, I'm going to get started on next Sunday's bible lesson.

It takes all week to check the background and circumstances of the people. The bible should never be boring. We are studying in the old testament this quarter. It is a good foundation for the new testament.

We are going to study 1st Peter next time. That will be good because he is the one that preached the first sermon and won 3000 people to Jesus.

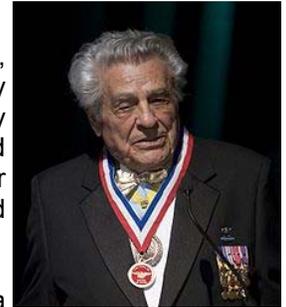
## PROGRAMS BY BEVERLY THOMPSON

### LUNCHEON MEETING AUGUST 23, 2016—JAMES MEGELLAS, LT. COL. US ARMY (RETIRED) The Park City Club 5956 Sherry Lane, 17th Floor Dallas, TX 75225



Lt. Col. James “Maggie” Megellas the most decorated Officer in the history of the 82nd Airborne Division is a paratrooper who got his “Baptism of Fire” in his 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division 504 PIR in the Appenine mountains of Italy. Then the PIR made an assault landing at Anzio where he was wounded twice and evacuated on a hospital ship to a Naples, Italy hospital where he recuperated for 4 weeks. He rejoined the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne and flew into England.

In 1944 his Division was rushed to the Battle of the Bulge through freezing snow, they approached a Belgium town and surprised 350 Germans leaving town. They caught them off guard and the battle was devastating and they killed many Germans. However on approaching the town a Mark V tank took aim and Megelles rushed forward and threw a grenade into the tank disabling it. He then led his men as they cleared and seized the town. For this he was nominated for the Medal of Honor, but was given a Silver Star because the report neglected to mention the tank in the citation.



Previously, in Holland he led a patrol behind enemy lines and single handedly attacked and wiped out a German outpost and knocked out a machine gun nest. For this action he was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest award for “Extraordinary Heroism”.

Throughout the war he served in Company H, 504 PIR, which he would later come to command. On January 1946, he led his company down Fifth avenue in New York City in the Victory Parade.

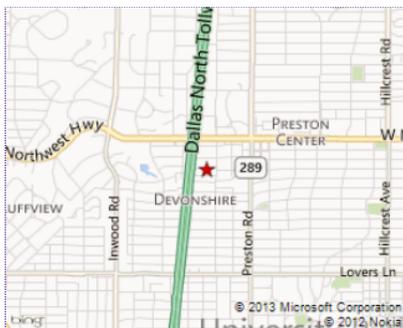
Megellas has received over 25 medals and decorations and they include: The Distinguished Service Cross, Presidential Unit Citation (with one Oak Leaf Cluster), Silver Star Medal (with Oak Leaf Cluster), Bronze Star (with one Oak Leaf Cluster), Purple Heart Medal (with one Oak Leaf Cluster).

Maggie travels extensively and is always supporting the troops...Maggie went with the 82nd Airborne to the front lines in Afghanistan when he was 90 and again when age 93.

He forwarded 25,000 care packages to service men and women for several years. He worked with USAID in Vietnam for 2 years leading 4,000 soldiers and civilians and other nations in civil-military relations. He holds a Masters Degree of International Policy, John Hopkins University and was an instructor of International Affairs at Florida Tech. He is on hand greeting troops coming home from the battlefield and being sent there at DFW.

He is going to talk to us about his experiences on the Waal River in Nijmegen, Holland. Where he participated with American forces crossing the river under intense machine gun fire to seize two bridges over the Waal River. He received a query from Cornelius Ryan who was writing “A Bridge Too Far”, about this battle that was made into a movie of his recollections of his 1944 Holland campaign.

Few men have given their lives to their country like Lt.Col James “Maggie” Megellas. He is Larger than Life and a true Patriot and Hero.



### The Park City Club 5956 Sherry Lane, 17th Floor Dallas, Texas 75225

Please send your reservations early to ensure we can make an accurate and timely reservation count. Mail the reservation coupon to MOAA-GDC Programs, PO Box 515495, Dallas, TX 75251; email Dave Schafer [moaschafer@att.net](mailto:moaschafer@att.net) or reserve online at [www.moagreaterdallas.org/onlinersvp.html](http://www.moagreaterdallas.org/onlinersvp.html). You may also call Dave at (214)577-4107.

MOAA-GDC accepts **PayPal** for paying for your luncheon at our website which allows you to pay by credit card. <http://www.moagreaterdallas.org/onlinersvp.html>

## LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY AUGUST 2016 BY JIM BROWN



### TEXAS COUNCIL OF CHAPTERS VOTES TO DEFEND HAZELWOOD ACT

On 22 July, Jim Brown and Paul Hendricks attended the Texas Council of Chapters (TCC) meeting along with North Texas Chapter President Sam Wilder to discuss his proposals to save the Hazelwood Act that provides tuition exemptions for Texas veterans and their dependents at state colleges and universities. The TCC approved those proposals substantially in the form published in the Legislative Update for February 2016. Your Legislative Committee will be supporting the effort to save the Hazelwood Act benefits in next year's state legislature and will keep you advised on developments.

### COMMISSION PROPOSES VETERAN CARE CHANGES

After reports of secret waiting lists at the VA medical center in Phoenix, Arizona, MOAA urged President Obama to establish an independent commission to recommend how best to organize and deliver health care in the VA Health Administration (VHA). This led to the passage of the Veterans' Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 and the establishment of the Commission on Care. After 10 months of hearing testimony from a wide range of experts, including MOAA, the Commission on Care has issued its final report.

VA Secretary Bob McDonald, MOAA, and other veteran organizations are pleased the report focuses on reforming and enhancing the VHA, rather than privatizing or dismantling it. Many of the recommendations are in line with McDonald's MyVA transformation efforts currently underway and supported by veteran organizations.

The report cited the quality of VA health care as comparable to, or better than the care in the private sector, though it varies greatly from facility to facility. It identified a number of deficiencies requiring urgent reform and made the following recommendations:

- Establish high-performing, integrated community-based health care networks;
- Credential community providers to ensure appropriate education, training, and experience;
- Allow veterans to choose primary care providers and/or specialty care providers in the VHA care system;
- Retain existing VA specialty care resources and expertise in fields like spinal cord injury, blind rehabilitation, mental health care, and prosthetics;
- Ensure coordination of care and providing support for veterans;
- Improve data collection and management;
- Establish a leadership succession strategy and management system, applying best private sector practices; and
- Establish an expert body to develop recommendations for VA care eligibility and benefit design and simplified eligibility criteria.

The commission proposed an extended term of office for the leader of the VHA care system and a governing board of directors charged with developing a national strategy for creating the new system, held accountable to the President for oversight and sustaining continuous transformation.

MOAA President and CEO, Lt Gen Dana Atkins, USAF (Ret) said that: "[W]e appreciate the Commission's sincere effort to strike a balance of sustaining and improving VA care delivery while enhancing civilian care opportunities. MOAA is grateful for (the Commission's) selfless dedication in producing this thoughtful and thorough report. Along with our veteran service organization partners, we look forward to working with the president and Congress to translate the Commission's recommendations into effective action. In the meantime, we urge Congress to pass the VA Secretary's Consolidation of Care in the Community plan and the Veterans First Act (S. 2921) to help ensure our nation's veterans receive the care they need and deserve today and in the future."

### HOUSE AND SENATE HEADING FOR A SHOWDOWN OVER WAR FUNDING BUDGET

PowerPost has reported that House Armed Services Committee Chairman Mac Thornberry (R-Tex.) supports tapping a war funding account to make sure Pentagon programs and military campaigns get the funding they need.

House and Senate Republicans are at odds over how to allocate war spending, all but guaranteeing a showdown later this year over how to fund defense programs and keep military campaigns going in Afghanistan and Iraq and against the Islamic State.

House Republicans want to dip into the war account to help pay for Pentagon programs they feel would otherwise get squeezed. But their approach will make it necessary for Congress to approve an emergency war funding bill next spring, effectively blowing budget caps — a politically testy issue and a risk Senate Republicans decided not to take.

## LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY AUGUST 2016 - CONTINUED

Instead, the Senate Armed Services Committee produced a policy bill that aligns with the broader budget deal struck by Democrats and GOP leaders last year, accepting that “the agreement is the agreement,” despite leading Republicans’ concerns that they may be shortchanging certain priorities in the process.

At issue is an extra \$18 billion worth of war funds that the House Armed Services Committee shifted to Defense Department programs.

Congress’s Democratic minority opposes the accounting tactic of dipping further into the war account, seeing it as a Republican ploy to funnel more money to pet projects and squeeze more funding for defense without increasing spending for education, infrastructure and other domestic programs. Maintaining such parity is an important priority for the party. Last year, President Obama vetoed a first version of the annual defense policy bill over similar objections and has threatened to do so again.

Almost all House Armed Services Committee Democrats supported this year’s defense policy bill with reservations when it was approved by the panel. They see Senate Republicans’ decision not to follow the House’s approach on war funding as “very helpful,” according to a committee aide, who said, “It means that ... Democrats could get another opportunity later to fix this and then make a final call on whether they want to support it or not.”]

### JULY- AUGUST 2016 CONGRESSIONAL RECESS CAMPAIGN

Between July 18 and September 5, most U.S. senators and representatives will be on recess in their home districts to meet with constituents. This is a great opportunity for you to help the Greater Dallas Chapter to visit your elected officials’ local offices and advise them of your and MOAA’s concerns about the FY17 Defense Authorization Bill. The goal is to ask legislators to make sure that bill:

- Retains the pay raise and force level improvements in the House-passed bill version.
- Drops Senate-proposed housing allowance cuts (\$10,000-\$20,000 or more annually in some cases)
- Prevents disproportional TRICARE fee increases for retired members and families
- Makes real progress toward eliminating the military “widows tax”

It’s imperative to let our legislators know how we feel about these important topics.

To assist us in preparing for these meetings, MOAA developed fact sheets and talking points on the key issues listed above. If you would like to be part of a delegation to visit your congressional representative, please call **Jim Brown at (972) 407-1092**.

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## LUNCHEON MEETING — OCTOBER 25, 2016

Col. Miguel Howe, USA, Ret. is the Director of Service Initiative at the President George W. Bush Library. He is responsible for leading the Bush Institute’s work to honor the service and sacrifice of post 9/11 veterans, service members and their families and to unite the efforts of non-profits, businesses, universities, individual citizens and communities to empower all post 9/11 veterans to continue to serve as national assets after they take off the uniform.

Colonel Howe served 24 years in the Army in a myriad of command and staff assignments in Iraq and Afghanistan. He deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom as the commander of the Afghan National Army Special Operations Advisory Group, Camp Morehead Afghanistan. He also deployed in support of Iraqi Freedom as the Chief of Staff for the NATO Training Mission in Al Rustamiyah, Iraq.

As Special Forces Officer, he has commanded special operations forces on numerous deployments in Latin America with the 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne). Colonel Howe served as the Special Assistant to the CEO of the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) and commanded the U.S. Army Southern California Recruiting Battalion. He began his Army career in the 25th Infantry Division as a Rifle Platoon Leader. Colonel Howe was selected in 2006 by President George W. Bush to serve as a White House Fellow. He is a graduate of the United States Military Academy and earned a Master of Arts in National Security Studies from Georgetown University. He is married with two children.



## SAGE SURVIVOR BY NANCY RUTHFORD SODEMAN

Farmers Assisting Returning Military (F.A.R.M.) is not the typical creation of an entrepreneur. Their goal is not to be the next multi-millionaire company. Two military veterans, Stephen Smith and James Jeffers, established this nonprofit group with the goal of encouraging camaraderie among like returnees from war in order to alleviate depression, suicide and other maladies common to many veterans, many with traumatic injuries. <http://www.farmvet.org>

They have discovered that working the soil bolsters the spirit. The acts of scattering seed, pulling up weeds and gathering the harvest with others brings peace, comfort and exhilaration that spell success for these two men and fellow veterans working with them.

Jeffers and Smith lease a farm of 15 acres in Desoto with a large garden outdoors and a micro-green plot indoors. A large kitchen keeps the veterans busy preparing meals and a den gives space for meditation, yoga, massage, acupuncture and meetings, according to the article in The Dallas Morning News of June 23, 2016. The place offers consolation, among many other virtues. FARM also includes a new project – to create an area on city of Dallas property near the downtown farmer's market that shows how to garden and how to enjoy good food.

Not one man earns a full-time salary. Jeffers labors daily at the farm while Smith comes in twice a week to help. It's time off from five days weekly of operating his roofing company. Five part-time interns at FARM earn an allowance of \$1000 monthly for six months that is provided as a grant. Many more activities keep the veterans busy including meal preparation and meetings and plain hard work. Not only do they toil day by day; but also they wrap their minds, like a labyrinth, around such issues as grants that always expire and expenses that must be met. Each day is a challenge to face. Dedication to such tasks keeps these veterans going.

Confidence and reliance on one another are other qualities that keep Jeffers and Smith and their fellow workers on track. Partners, fellow workers as well as would-be grantors try to be straightforward in conversations with each other about needs to be met.

Pulling together, accepting advice and relying on friends and mentors all help these veterans to gain the peace they seek. Call this social networking, if you will, but problems are best worked out through collaboration in the setting of Farmers Assisting Returning Military (FARM). Stephen Smith, James Jeffers and their colleagues set before us a goal that will keep on working. The fifteen-acre project in Desoto is only a start. Much more will come in time.

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## PERSONAL AFFAIRS BY BEN COLE

### Reporting a Retiree's Death—Part 1

Nothing is more heartfelt than the loss of a family member. Whither the loss is of the service member, spouse or other immediate family, all have served and played a role in the defense of our great nation. And though this is a difficult time, it's crucial to report the death of a military retiree promptly, as to continue the retiree relationship with benefits to the family. Below is a guideline on what needs to be collected and conveyed to the Defense Financial & Accounting Service (DFAS). By following the steps below, it is hoped this transition will be a smooth one.

#### What You Need

- Retiree's name, social security number and date of death
- Manner of death: natural, suicide, accident, homicide
- Retiree's marital status upon death
- Names, address of retiree's designated beneficiaries or next of kin living and deceased

#### How to Report a Retiree's Death

1. Complete a Notification of Death Fast Form, DFAS FASTFORM 9221, January 2013 (FFv11.0). This is a pdf file that can be completed on the computer, saved, and then submitted. Upon notification, DFAS will stop monthly payments to prevent overpayment. If you need help completing the form, please read the form instructions or call 800-321-1080 for assistance. If the computer is not your forte and you cannot complete the Notification of Death form, call DFAS at 800-321-1080. Have the above information ready. As a minimum upon first contact, DFAS will need the decedent's Social Security Number and the date of death, when you call.

2. Within 7-10 business days after reporting the death to DFAS, you should receive a letter containing the following documents:  
SF1174 Claim for Unpaid Compensation of Deceased Member of the Uniformed Service  
Annuity account forms and instructions (if the decedent was enrolled in the Survivor Benefit Plan or the Retired Serviceman's Family Protection Plan)

3. Complete the forms you received with your letter and return them with a copy of the retiree's Death Certificate that includes cause of death to:

**DFAS U.S. Military Retired Pay**  
**P.O. Box 7130 London, KY 40742-7130 Fax: 800-469-6559**

This is important, you are not alone during this reporting evolution. If you need assistance completing your claim forms, call 800-321-1080. See our September newsletter for **Additional Tips to Assist you in making your claim**



# LUNCHEON MEETING — AUGUST 23, 2016



## Reservation for the August 23, 2016 Tuesday Luncheon Meeting

The Park City Club 5956 Sherry Lane, 17th Floor Dallas, Texas 75225 Phone: (214) 373-0756

Social 11:00 AM — Buffet Opens 11:15 AM Meeting 12:00 Noon

\_\_\_\_\_ Person's at \$25.00 each Check enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
payable to "MOAA - Greater Dallas Chapter"

Mail Reservation to: Dave Schafer

MOAA-GDC Programs, PO Box 515495, Dallas, TX 75251

 (Spouse/Guest)

Please print name's below exactly as you wish you name badge's to read:

Need a ride? \_\_\_\_\_ If yes, your ZIP code \_\_\_\_\_ Give a ride? \_\_\_\_\_ If yes, your ZIP code \_\_\_\_\_

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**PRESIDENT—ELECT** CAPT Steven Cole, USN

**VICE PRESIDENT — MEMBERSHIP** Lt Col David J. Schafer, USAF (Ret)

**VICE PRESIDENT—LEGISLATIVE** Lt Col James R. Brown USAFR (Ret)

**VICE PRESIDENT—PROGRAMS** Mrs. Beverly Thompson, Auxiliary

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Scholarship Committee: CH COL Lyle Metzler, USA (Ret)

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Auxiliary Liaison: Mrs. Beverly Thompson, Auxiliary

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The MOAA-Greater Dallas Chapter is a nonprofit organization chartered on November 28, 1967.  
Annual dues are \$20.00 for members and \$10.00 for auxiliary members.

## CAREER TRANSITION – JOB FAIRS

BY JOEL BATALSKY, MOAA-GDC CAREER TRANSITION OFFICER

### Dallas All Veterans Job Fair — August 25, 2016 11:00 AM – 3:00 PM

Hurst Conference Center 1601 Campus Drive Hurst, TX 76054

#### Hurst Conference Center Information

- The Job Fair will take place in the Grand Ballroom.
- Please enter the facility through the main entry.

#### Parking Information

The Hurst Conference Center offers FREE parking spaces in the Parking Deck and Lower Level Parking (underground). There are 90 additional spaces close to the building, located on Campus Drive and Thousand Oaks. Additional FREE parking can be found at Tarrant County College at 828 Harwood Drive.

<https://events.recruitmilitary.com/events/dallas-all-veterans-job-fair-august-25-2016#faq>

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### Virtual Military Career Fair — MOAA 24 August



Employer and job seeker registration coming soon!

Looking to connect with employers that aren't in your location? Virtual Career Fairs are very effective in connecting talented military and veterans with great companies who value your skills, all from the comfort of your home or office. There is no fee for job seekers to attend. Open to all who have served or are currently serving.

<http://www.moaa.org/careerfair>

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## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The following is the meeting schedule for the Executive Committee of the Greater Dallas Chapter of the MOAA.

Meetings are held from 9 am to 11 am at the Point Building, C.C. Young Retirement Community, 4847 West Lather Drive, Dallas, TX 75214:

### 2016

17 September and 19 November

### 2017

21 January, 18 March, 20 May, 15 July, 16 September, and 18 November

All Chapter members are welcome to attend any Executive Committee meeting.