



# MOAA

## FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

STEVEN COLE — SBCOLE@SBCGLOBAL.NET



### August Meeting Canceled and Speaker to be Rescheduled.

With the heat and members away for the summer we have elected to cancel our August meeting. Our wonderful speaker Jeffery Milligan Network Director for VISN 17 will be rescheduled for another meeting.

Our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary dinner will be our next function and it promises to be a special event in the history of our chapter. For more information and to make your reservation, see pages 4 and 7.

I did want to take this newsletter to tell each of you how much respect I have for your service, be it time served on the frontlines or the support elements at home. We are different, you and I, from civilians. We operate differently than civilians, and these traits can give us a competitive advantage in life. Since they're common to us, we may not be aware of them, or of how these combined traits set us apart from others.

I would like to point out 6 traits that exist in everyone I have met at the Greater Dallas Chapter of MOAA:

**Dependability** is a key characteristic of veterans. When we say we are going to do something, we are expected to follow through all the way to the end, whether the tasking is simple or complex. We have been trained to figure it out.

**Integrity** One of my favorite sayings from Intelligence briefings was, "When you lie, people die." We are taught to take full responsibility for our actions, and if wrong, we would rather suffer the consequences of being wrong than lie and be caught.

**Decision-Making** is honed by our assignments. We make them quickly without total picture or information available to us. We are not afraid to make decisions and then make corrections as we encounter unforeseen challenges.

**Looking Out for Others** is engrained in our actions. Without request, we step up to help others and not for personal gain.

**Comaraderie** is a big deal. We know that progress cannot be achieved alone.

**Initiative** has us seek additional tasking, going above and beyond, completing tasks with minimal guidance or direction. We strive to exceed expectations.

Tenacity surfaces as each of our desires to face a good and worthy challenge. We see the world differently than our civilian counterparts.

Thank you for being such an extraordinary group.

### MOAA-GDC receives 2016 Five-Star Level of Excellence Award



### UPCOMING EVENTS:

#### August Luncheon Cancelled



Saturday October 7, 2017

Maggiano's Little Italy

Social 4:00 PM — Dinner 5:00 PM  
— Program 6:00 to 7:30 PM

Our keynote speaker will be Lt. General Lt. Gen. Dana Atkins, USAF (Ret) current president of MOAA

See Page 4 for more information

Reserve online at:

[moagreaterdallas.org/rsvp50th.html](http://moagreaterdallas.org/rsvp50th.html)



## PERSONAL AFFAIRS BY BEN COLE

Hey, you allergy sufferers!!! (And who among you isn't one?) I recently received an article titled "TRICARE CAN OFFER RELIEF FOR ALLERGY SUFFERERS" and I apologize for not sending it along before now.....

Whether it is seasonal or a reaction to a specific food, allergies can be bothersome or dangerous. With seasonal allergies, depending on where you live, allergies can begin to affect you as early as February. If you suffer from food or other allergies, the effects can be felt year-round.

The key to relief is finding exactly what you are allergic to as soon as possible. Allergies occur when the immune system reacts to substances that do not bother the general population. According to the U.S. National Library of Medicine, allergic reactions are sensitivities to substances, known as allergens, which come into contact with the skin, nose, eyes, respiratory tract, and gastro-intestinal tract. Allergens can be breathed into the lungs, swallowed or injected.

Common seasonal allergens and when sufferers may begin to experience a reaction are:

Trees: February to June      Grasses: May to June      Ragweed: August to October      Mold: Does not fluctuate by season

Common food allergens are: Nuts, Eggs, Milk/Dairy, Fish, Shellfish/Seafood, Wheat and Soy.

Reactions vary for each person when they are exposed to something to which they are allergic. First-time exposure may produce only a mild reaction. Mild allergic reactions include itching, rashes, watery or red eyes and nasal congestion. Certain reactions can occur several hours after exposure, particularly if the allergen causes a reaction after being eaten. In very rare cases, reaction develop after 24 hours. However, one of the most severe allergic reactions, anaphylaxis, is a sudden and severe allergic reaction that occurs within minutes of exposure. Anaphylaxis requires immediate medical attention.

Doctors use skin and blood tests to diagnose allergies and determine treatment options. TRICARE covers services and supplies required in the diagnosis and treatment of allergies. Treatments include medicines, allergy shots, and avoiding the substances that cause reactions.

If you suffer from allergies or need more information, please visit the allergy services page on the TRICARE website to learn more about what treatment options are available. Go to: [https://tricare.mil/CoveredServices/BenefitUpdates/Archives/03\\_21\\_17\\_Allergies](https://tricare.mil/CoveredServices/BenefitUpdates/Archives/03_21_17_Allergies)

### New Income Tiers for Medicare Part B Premiums in 2018

You may remember some years ago, Medicare had to fix the payment system used to pay doctors. A permanent fix was passed in 2015. The permanent fix established new income tiers for Part B premiums to pay for the doctor payment fix. The new income tiers start in 2018.

Below you can compare the current tiers against the 2018 income tiers. You will see how the higher income tiers have smaller amounts thereby making more people pay higher premiums in the future. The 2018 Part B premiums are not known at this time.

Tax Filing Status	2017	2017 Part B Premiums	2018
Single	Less than \$85,001	\$134mo	Less than \$85,001
Married	Less than \$170,001		Less than \$170,001
Single	\$85,001 - \$107,000	\$187.50	\$85,001 - \$107,000
Married	\$170,001 - \$214,000		\$170,001 - \$214,000
Single	\$107,001 - \$160,000	\$267.90	\$107,001 - \$133,500
Married	\$214,001 - \$320,000		\$214,001 - \$267,000
Single	\$160,001 - \$214,000	\$348.30	\$133,501 - \$160,000
Married	\$320,001 - \$428,000		\$267,001 - \$320,000
Single	More than \$241,000	\$428.60	More than \$160,000
Married	More than \$428,000		More than \$320,000

## PRESIDENT'S ARTICLE CONTINUED BY STEVEN COLE

As the dog-days of Summer wage its time upon us, there are a number of important dates that we remember. For ourselves and for our brothers and sisters, who have served our country, unashamed and with compassion.

August 4 is the Birthday of our US Coast Guard.

August 7 is National Purple Heart Day

August 8 is anniversary of Victory over Japan (VJ) Day (1945). Never forget.

August 29 is the birthday for the US Marine Forces Reserves.

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## SAGE SURVIVOR BY NANCY RUTHFORD SODEMAN

We have a problem. Military veterans consider suicide at a much higher rate than the public in general. Dr, David J Shulkin, head of U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs, gives wise advice on how we can all help through such crises. He reminds us to take time to sit down with the veteran. Let him know that we care. Learn to draw him out by listening and ask questions that matter. Walk with him, heed his words and learn from him.

Put aside your own cares and let the veteran lead. This first step is the biggest hurdle. You learn to loosen or turn over the reins so that the veteran can accept help. The veteran can teach you. Listen and wait. You come to notice and accept the gifts they give you in opening up to you.

Here are several examples that can work in your effort to help. Let's look at the veteran seeking a job. The nonprofit American Corporate Partners joins like workers with veterans who need help writing a resume' or getting ready for an interview and much more. Learn about them on the Internet: [www.acp-usa.org/mentoringprogram/program-overview](http://www.acp-usa.org/mentoringprogram/program-overview). Or for veterans with children needing help, you can look up a group such as Hope for the Warrior ([hopeforthewarriors.org](http://hopeforthewarriors.org)) to figure out how to collect school supplies for children of veterans or how to help military families by collecting clothing for school. This is a nonprofit organization that assists wounded service members, their families and families of military killed in action: its name on the Internet: [hopeforthewarrior.org](http://hopeforthewarrior.org). Another option is simply to donate money. On the Internet [charitynavigator.org](http://charitynavigator.org) lists nonprofit organizations that use donations to help veterans rather than spending too much on advertising, etc.

You can help in small ways. If you know a veteran sick with cancer, you may help to organize the pills he must take. You could buy a pill kit at the pharmacy and organize when the pills are to be taken. Another common need is to organize help to supply food for a military family in crises.

The Veterans Center of North Texas offers opportunities for you to volunteer locally. VCONT offers assistance to veterans with benefits, health, housing, transportation, education, legal, employment, financial, employment and integration. Contact the Veterans Center of North Texas through their website [www.vcont.or](http://www.vcont.or) or call them at 214-600-2966.



Yet, you do not have to help out alone. Remember this example. Earlier this year two brothers were trapped in a riptide 100 yards off shore in the Gulf of Mexico. As the currents slapped the boys hither and thither, threatening to drown them, the parents gathered about nine fellow swimmers to form a brigade to reach them. The mother was sure the boys would drown and she begged for more help. Dozens of swimmers joined hands in the water. Their united strength brought the boys to safety. It was the joining of forces that saved the youngsters.

As Dr. David Shulkin reminds us, each can make a difference in the life of a veteran in crisis. Just one small act can make a difference. **It can even save a life.**



## PROGRAMS BY BEVERLY THOMPSON

# 50TH ANNIVERSARY DINNER SATURDAY OCTOBER 7, 2017



Our keynote speaker will be Lt. General Lt. Gen. Dana Atkins, USAF (Ret) current president of MOAA. Lt. Gen. Atkins is a native of Portland, Ore. He earned his bachelor's degree in biology from the University of Portland and holds two master's degrees, one in aeronautical science from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University and another in national security strategy from the National War College.

A command pilot with more than 4,000 hours in fighter aircraft, Atkins has served in a number of key command and staff positions, including commander, 20th Fighter Wing, Shaw AFB, S.C.; commander, 35th Fighter Wing, Misawa, Japan; vice commander, 7th Air Force and U.S. Air Force Korea; director of operations, U.S. Pacific Command; and special assistant to the supreme allied commander Europe during the air war over Serbia. During his career, he flew as a demonstration pilot for both the European A-10 Demonstration Team and the U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds.



At the time of his retirement from the Air Force, Atkins served as commander, Alaskan Command, U.S. Pacific Command; commander, 11th Air Force, Pacific Air Forces; and commander, Alaskan North American Defense Region, Elmendorf AFB, Alaska.

He has been awarded the Defense Superior Service Medal with oak leaf cluster. Legion of Merit with three oak leaf clusters, Distinguished Flying Cross, Defense Meritorious Service Medal and many others. He and his wife, Laura, were the 2004 recipients of the General and Mrs. Jerome F. O'Malley Award, which recognizes the wing commander and spouse whose contributions to the nation, the Air Force, and the local community best exemplify the highest ideals and positive leadership of a military couple.

Before becoming the ninth president of MOAA, Atkins served as president of Chronicle Media, a print and digital media company based in Augusta, Ga., that serves the southeastern U.S.

We look forward to seeing you at our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner.

**Date: 7 October 2017**

**Location: Maggiano's Little Italy in the North Dallas (in the North Park shopping center).**

**Address: 8697 North Central Expressway, Dallas, TX 75225**

**Directions: Take the Northwest Highway exit off US 75 and head west on Northwest Highway. Turn right into the North Park Center shopping center at the first traffic light west of US 75 (about ¼ mile). Maggiano's is directly ahead at the end of the parking lane. Free valet parking is available.**

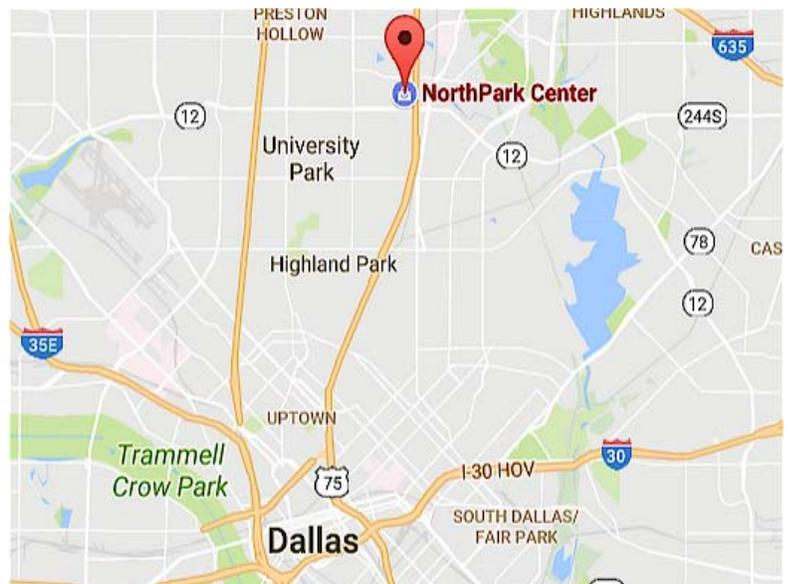
**Time: 4:00 to 5:00 PM Registration and Social  
5:00 to 6:00 PM Dinner  
6:00 to 7:30 PM Program  
7:30 PM Adjourn**

**Dress: Business Attire**

**Cost is \$50.00 per person**

**Reservations are available now through PayPal at [moagreaterdallas.org/rsvp50th.html](http://moagreaterdallas.org/rsvp50th.html) or you may mail the reservation coupon on page 7.**

**You may also contact Steven Cole (972) 333-4895 [sbcole@sbcglobal.net](mailto:sbcole@sbcglobal.net)**



**LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY AUGUST 2017** BY JIM BROWN**Tricare expands mental health, substance abuse, opioid treatment options**

New Tricare mental health benefits, including expanded treatment for substance-use issues include:

- Emergency and nonemergency inpatient hospitalization.
- Psychiatric residential treatment care for children.
- Inpatient/residential substance-use disorder care.
- Partial hospitalization. Outpatient and office-based mental health and substance-use treatment.

The changes will give more flexibility to families to seek the right level of care for their mental health needs, officials said. "If someone does well in inpatient psychiatric care and no longer requires 24-hour care, they could step down a level," said Dr. Patricia Moseley, a senior policy analyst for military child and family behavioral health at the Defense Health Agency, in a statement announcing the new options that are available. "Their options may be a partial hospital program, an intensive outpatient program at six hours a day, or outpatient treatment with a Tricare-authorized provider, "Now we have a continuum of care to meet our beneficiaries' needs."

Tricare officials have taken steps to increase the number of mental health treatment providers and substance use treatment providers, by streamlining the certification process. The changes will remove unique certification requirements, to become consistent with industry standards, officials said.

Tricare has also removed the limits on the number of times per week that patients can receive substance use treatment, smoking cessation counseling and outpatient treatment. And Tricare removed the requirement for authorization after the eighth outpatient mental health or substance use visit, officials said.

Patients who have been diagnosed with an opioid use disorder may qualify for Medication Assisted Treatment, which combines drug and mental health therapies. It's covered if the Tricare provider has a special certification from the Drug Enforcement Agency to prescribe buprenorphine. Tricare will cover an opioid treatment program when the patient has been diagnosed with the opioid use disorder, requires medically monitored detoxification with direct access to medical services, and needs medical support, but doesn't need a 24-hour medical environment.

Tricare will also cover office-based opioid treatment by providers that follow federal, state and local regulations.

**Trump promises huge increase in private sector care for veterans**

Leo Shane III reports in Military Times that President Trump has promised to triple the number of veterans "seeing the doctor of their choice" in coming months as part of an ongoing, ambitious reform plan at the Department of Veterans Affairs. The comments, which came at a veterans rally in Ohio, are likely to again raise concerns among administration critics of large-scale privatization of VA responsibilities.

At the start of the year, almost a third of all veterans' medical appointments scheduled through the department were with doctors working outside the VA system, in private clinics. White House officials have previously promised an overhaul of those outside care programs in coming months, with an eye towards sending even more patients to community physicians.

VA Secretary David Shulkin has repeatedly pushed back against concerns that those moves amount to a dismantling of the department, and promising lawmakers repeatedly that both he and Trump aren't working on a large-scale shift of taxpayer funds outside the government health care system.

In an editorial in USA Today this week, Shulkin said that outside care programs for the first half of 2017 VA were up 26 percent over the same period last year. That totals more than 18 million veteran medical appointments.

Other Trump Administration accomplishments include the passage of sweeping new accountability legislation governing VA employees, new same-day mental health services at every VA medical center, and new public wait-times data for every VA health facility.

"You've put America first every day of your lives," Trump told the crowd. "And now we have a VA that will truly put our veterans first."

## LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY AUGUST 2017 BY JIM BROWN CONTINUED

### Vets in Congress push for Global War on Terrorism memorial

Leo Shane III of Military Times reported that the House of Representatives unanimously passed legislation to start the process of building a Global War on Terrorism memorial. The measure would allow the Global War on Terror Memorial Foundation, an independent non-profit, to begin what is expected to be a decade-long effort to fund, plan and build a memorial on the National Mall dedicated to the recent wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The Senate still must approve the measure before it becomes law. But lawmakers are hopeful the personal stories of loss and sacrifice they shared last week can fast-track the legislation.

Rep. Seth Moulton, D-Mass., a Marine Corps officer who served in Iraq said: "I'd like to share just one story with you about someone from my district who would be on this memorial. Capt. Jennifer Harris was a graduate from the U.S. Naval Academy and became the first Massachusetts woman killed in the Iraq war. "Jennifer was the epitome of leadership and sacrifice. On flying missions she had the call sign 'the dove.' She would often be called to evacuate our wounded soldiers and Marines on the battlefield. (Her) final mission was to transport blood supplies.

"She willingly volunteered for it, even though she was just days away from returning home. In fact, she was initially told, 'no, you are too close to leaving. Don't go.' But she said, "I want to fly one more time.

"Her superiors reluctantly agreed and Capt. Harris died on Feb. 7, along with six other crew members after insurgents shot down her helicopter. In her 20's with a bright future ahead of her, Capt. Harris was on her third tour of duty in Iraq ...

"The men and women who have given their all in the war on terror should be afforded a place on the national mall where their loved ones can pay respect and honor their sacrifice."

### Join us for August Congressional visits

Between July 28 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 as a MOAA member to visit your elected officials' local offices and advise them of your and MOAA's concerns on important matters.

Specifically, we need your help to influence the FY18 Defense Authorization Bill. The goal is to ask legislators to make sure that bill:

- Retains or improves upon the pay raise and force level improvements in the initial versions of the bill.
- Prevents disproportional TRICARE fee increases for retired members and families, including unreasonable increases to pharmacy copays.
- Makes real progress toward eliminating the military "widows tax" (SBP-DIC offset)

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

To assist you in preparing for these meetings, we've developed fact sheets and talking points on the key issues listed above.

You don't have to be an expert on every issue. That's why we designed the packages as we have - to include a "key points" summary to talk from, along with one-page fact sheets on each issue that you can print and leave with the legislators and/or their staffs.

You can use MOAA's website to [find your legislators' local offices](#) and [send suggested messages to your representatives](#) on a number of key issues.

Please contact Jim Brown at (972) 407-1092 or [jimbrown510@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jimbrown510@sbcglobal.net) if you would like to join him in visiting your representative's office.

[See Page 8 for Legislative Action Items](#)

# 50TH ANNIVERSARY DINNER SATURDAY OCTOBER 7, 2017



**Maggiano's Little Italy**  
East side of Northpark at US 75 and Northwest Highway.  
8697 North Central Expressway, Dallas, TX 75225

Social 4:00 PM — Dinner 5:00 PM — Program 6:00 to 7:30 PM

\_\_\_\_\_ Person's at \$50.00 each    Check enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
payable to "MOAA - Greater Dallas Chapter"

Mail Reservation to:

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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**VICE PRESIDENT—PROGRAMS** Mrs. Beverly Thompson, Auxiliary  
**SECRETARY** Lt Col Charles Kelley USAF, (Ret)

### Phone

(972) 333-4895  
(903) 669-7681  
(214) 577-4107  
(628)554-6657  
(972) 407-1092  
(972) 617-0858  
(214) 559-3619

### Email

sbcole@sbcglobal.net  
billdwiggins@yahoo.com  
moaschafer@att.net  
jimbass9661@tx.rr.com  
jimbrown510@sbcglobal.net  
bevartalk@aol.com  
chuck.kelley@yahoo.com

## APPOINTED OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

Editor **The Reporter** : William Hill, LCDR, USN, (Ret)  
Chaplain: CAPT Ben Cole USNR, (Ret)  
Legal Counsel: David C. Briggs, COL USA, (Ret)  
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Auxiliary Liaison: Mrs. Beverly Thompson, Auxiliary  
Webmaster and Email Distribution: Mrs. Sharon Hill, Auxiliary  
Meeting Coordinator: OPEN  
Greater Dallas Veterans Coalition representative: OPEN

(214) 321-8241 bill@hillengineeringservices.com  
(972) 669-0619 ben19320428@att.net  
(214) 559-3619 moaabriggs@gmail.com  
(972) 772-5459 lmetzler@charter.neet  
(972) 669-0619 ben19320428@att.net  
  
(214) 908-3708 joelbat@aol.com  
(972) 617-0858 bevartalk@aol.com  
(214) 321-8241 moaagdc@yahoo.com

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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.

**CHAPLAIN'S CORNER** BY BEN COLE

Uh-oh! Why haven't we listened and taken heed to the words of the wisdom of Solomon? His advice is recorded in Proverbs 18:13: "He who answers before listening---that is his folly and his shame."

**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 Lawther Drive, Dallas, TX 75214.

**2017**

6 September, and 18 November

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

**Prevent Steep TRICARE Fee Hikes  
Don't repeal the grandfathering clause**

The FY2018 national defense authorization bill negotiations are underway. The Senate's budget request includes large increases to TRICARE fees across the board. These fee increases are a direct result of the repeal of the 2017 National Defense Authorizations grand-fathering clause. The intention of the grand-fathering was to keep fees where they currently are for beneficiaries in the service prior to 1 January 2018. These fee increases are disproportional and do not reflect the service and sacrifice of the beneficiaries who have earned the health care benefit. Please send your legislators this MOAA suggested message to prevent these hefty fee increases from negatively impacting servicemembers and their families.

<http://capwiz.com/moaa/issues/alert/?alertid=78126646&PROCESS=Take+Action>

**Repeal Sequestration**

Unless current law is changed, sequestration will return next year and automatically trigger deep cuts to the Defense Department. These severe cuts will exhaust our resources and capabilities in immeasurable ways—the toll on our military and their families will likewise be incalculable.

The congressional session is just getting underway. Please engage your member of Congress—encourage them to make it their priority to repeal sequestration.

<http://capwiz.com/moaa/issues/alert/?alertid=74607626>