



# MOAA REPORTER

## FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

DAVE SCHAFER moaschafer@att.net



### Protect Your Earned Benefits

The Senate passed its version of the FY16 Defense Authorization bill on June 18<sup>th</sup>. The Senate bill contains many provisions that impact the earned benefits of active duty and retired members of the military. Col Brian Anderson, USAF Retired, MOAA Deputy Director for Council and Chapter Affairs, was the guest speaker at the Greater Dallas Chapter membership luncheon on June 23<sup>rd</sup>. Col Anderson emphasized the need for all MOAA members to closely follow MOAA's Legislative Updates over the next several weeks and be prepared to contact their elected representatives in Washington DC as the House and Senate lawmakers go into conference to resolve the differences in the two bills. Col Anderson emphasized in his presentation that **numbers matter!** It is becoming increasingly important for MOAA members to contact their legislators to let them know their positions on issues impacting our Nation's defense. Watch for alerts in your Legislative Update emails from MOAA National and reminders from the MOAA Greater Dallas Legislative Team. You can also go directly to the MOAA Take Action and Contact Congress web pages using links at the top of our website home page [www.moagreaterdallas.org](http://www.moagreaterdallas.org).

The table below shows the differences between the House and Senate versions of the FY16 Defense Authorization bills. MOAA will be looking for members to contact their legislators urging them to support the House version of the defense bill.

Proposal	House	Senate	Final
Retirement reform	Yes	Yes	Yes
TRICARE consolidation	No	No	No
Means testing TRICARE fees	No	No	No
Active duty pay raise	2.3%	1.3%	TBD
Cuts to housing allowances	No	Yes	TBD
Cuts to commissaries	No	Yes	TBD
TRICARE Rx fee increases	No	Yes	TBD

Col Anderson emphasized that keeping promises to our men and women in uniform is critical to maintaining a strong National Defense. Erosion of benefits contained in the Senate defense bill will impact the purchasing power of a mid-level NCO or officer by around \$6,000 per year. I remember what it was like to make ends meet when I was Captain in the Air Force.

*Editors Note: President's Article continues on page 4*



**MOAA-GDC receives 5 Star Levels of Excellence Award for 2014.**

MOAA's topnotch council and chapters compete annually to receive a four-star or five-star Levels of Excellence Award. The very best councils and chapters receive five-star awards. Our Chapter has been again selected as a 5 Star Chapter 2014.

### August 25—August Luncheon Meeting

Lieutenant General Brett Dula USAF was Vice Commander Air Combat command with headquarters at Langley Air Force Base, VA. where he assisted the commander in preparing and sustaining combat ready forces and to secure national security objectives. His major awards and decorations are Defense Distinguished Service Medal, Distinguished Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Distinguished Flying Cross and a long list of other medals.



More information on our upcoming programs is available on page 3 and on our website.

Please see page 4 for more information regarding Veteran Job Fairs in the Dallas/Fort Worth area.



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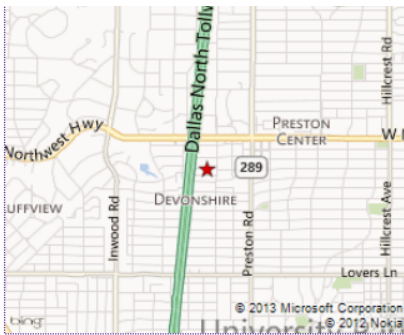
## PROGRAMS BY BEVERLY THOMPSON

# LUNCHEON MEETING — AUGUST 25, 2015

August 25, 2015 Luncheon Speaker - Lieutenant General Brett Dula USAF



Lieutenant General Brett Dula USAF was Vice Commander Air Combat command with headquarters at Langley Air Force Base, VA. where he assisted the commander in preparing and sustaining combat ready forces and to secure national security objectives. He assisted in managing a force of more than 140,000 active-duty people, 130 bombers, 1,300 fighters and 500 support aircraft at more than 30 locations. He has held key duties in the intelligence community. He's a command pilot with more than 4,400 flying hours including 380 missions in Southeast Asia. He's a graduate of the AF academy. His major awards and decorations are Defense Distinguished Service Medal, Distinguished Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Distinguished Flying Cross and a long list of other medals. His command stations and service record is lengthy. He is an incredible speaker and will speak on the topic of: "The Dark Side of Military Aviation."



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 moaaschafer@att.net or reserve online at [www.moaagreaterdallas.org/onlinersvp.html](http://www.moaagreaterdallas.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. We would appreciate you also filling out the RSVP form and checking your type of payment at the website.



## MEMBERSHIP ARTICLE BY DAVE SCHAFER

We are continuing to work several membership initiatives during July. We are following up with members who live in the geographical area now served by the North Texas Chapter to determine which chapter they would like to be a member of. We are also sending out letters to 600+ prospective MOAA National members who are not Greater Dallas Chapter members inviting them to become members of our chapter.

On another note, Bill Lavallee and I are heading up the nominating committee for officers, executive committee members, and committee chairpersons for 2016. The time commitments for these positions range from a couple of hours per month to several hours per week. We need new blood and new ideas to maintain the vitality of our chapter. Please contact Bill at 972-291-8776 or me at 214-577-4107 if you are interested in serving in one of these positions.

Please welcome the following new members for July: Col Lennie and Mrs. Karen Simpson, Col USAFR (ACT) Flower Mound



Colonel Brian Anderson presenting MOAA-GDC President Dave Schafer and MOAA-GDC Vice President—Programs, Beverly Thompson with coins as a thank you in recognition of work from Admiral Ryan.

July 23,  
2015  
Luncheon  
Pictures



Speaker Colonel Brian Anderson receiving Certificate of Appreciation from MOAA-GDC President Dave Schafer.

## CAREER TRANSITION – JOB FAIRS

BY JOEL BATALSKY, MOAA-GDC CAREER TRANSITION OFFICER

According to the Department of Veterans Affairs, about 250,000 men and women will be leaving the military each year over the next several years. Many of these veterans will be moving to the Greater Dallas area. Why? Well, the April 2015 unemployment rate for the Dallas metro area was 3.7% versus 5.1% for the US. Wages in our area are higher than the national average and our cost of living is one of the lowest in the nation. Add on the fact that Texas is one of the most veteran friendly states in the nation and you have the recipe for significant veteran population growth. One estimate is that the veteran population in the Greater DFW area will grow by 4% by 2018 – from the current 410,000 to over 426,000. Accounting for veterans leaving the area, we will have about 20,000 new veterans looking for jobs in the Greater Dallas area over the next 3 years.

Not all of the veterans looking for jobs will be officers. Not all of the veterans looking for jobs will be retirees. Most will be NCOs and enlisted personnel leaving the service well before retirement. Our Chapter is addressing the needs of all veterans through our Career Transition program. I have identified 3 Veterans job fairs to be held in July and August. The job fairs are tailored for veterans, active duty members, guard and reserve members, and military spouses. The job fairs are tailored for veterans, active duty members, guard and reserve members, and military spouses. **Please pass this information on to any active or former military members, or military spouses who might be looking for a job.**

The **US Chamber of Commerce Foundation** is sponsoring two military job fairs in the DFW area. A special bonus is available for persons registering for the job fair at Globe Life Park: **All registrants are eligible for 2 tickets to attend that evening's game between the Rangers and Yankees.** For more information visit <http://www.uschamberfoundation.org/events/hiringfairs>

- Tuesday, July 14, 2015 at the Resource Connection Conference Center , 2300 Circle Drive, Ft. Worth, TX from 10 am to 1 pm
- Thursday, July 30, 2015 at the Globe Life Park, Arlington, Texas from 11:30 am to 3 pm

**Recruit Military** is sponsoring the Dallas All Veteran Job Fair on Thursday, August 27, 2015 at the Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center, 650 S. Griffin Street, Dallas, Texas from 11 am to 3 pm. For more information visit <https://events.recruitmilitary.com/events/dallas-all-veteran-job-fair-august-27-2015>.

For more information about these Veterans Job Fairs, please contact LTC Joel Batalsky, USA Retired, [joelbat@aol.com](mailto:joelbat@aol.com) or 214-908-3708.



U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation

## PRESIDENT'S ARTICLE (CONTINUED) BY DAVE SCHAFER

Taking \$6,000 a year away from my family would have been a strong incentive for me to leave the service. Col Anderson also cautioned that changes being considered to the military retirement system could reduce incentives for men and women to stay beyond 20 years, draining our military of the leadership needed to maintain a strong National Defense. MOAA continues to work this issue with Congress.

Finally, we cannot forget the elephant in the room that is driving many of the fiscal decisions in Congress – Sequestration. Sequestration puts most of the burden of spending cuts on the Department of Defense. It is time for Congress to remove this burden. Our Legislative team plans to visit the local offices of our elected representatives this summer to present our position on this and other issues impacting our military. They are also encouraging members to attend town hall meetings during the congressional recess this summer and express their concerns about the impact of Sequestration on our National Defense. Contact Jim Brown, VP for Legislative Affairs, if you are interested in helping with these efforts. You can reach Jim via email at [jimbrown510@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jimbrown510@sbcglobal.net) on phone at 214-343-9424.

## LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY JULY 2015 UPDATE BY PAUL HENDRICKS

During February 2015, members from the North Texas and Greater Dallas MOAA Chapter Legislative Teams supported the Texas Council of Chapters (TCC) and the Texas Coalition of Veterans Organizations while advocating to the 84th session of the Texas Legislature in Austin, Texas. The goal of the Texas MOAA team was to meet with each of the 31 Texas Senators and 150 Texas Representatives or their staff members and highlight issues and bills that impact current and future benefits for Texas Veterans.

As the 84th Texas Legislative Session draws to a close, we have invited Texas State Senator Van Taylor to meet with our MOAA chapters to provide a summary of the bills that were addressed and passed during this session that will impact Texas Veterans and their families. We also hope to be able to have a US representative provide similar update at the federal level in future meetings. In addition to these efforts, we are also in the process of becoming a member of the Texas Coalition of Veterans Organizations to provide us an active voice and greater insight into State Legislative activities.

During the May TCC meeting, Jim Cunningham, TCVO Vice Chairman, provided a summary of the status of the ongoing legislative issues. His status report is below. Again, we will plan to receive an end of Session summary from Texas State Senator Taylor during our August membership meetings.



**TEXAS  
COALITION of  
VETERANS  
ORGANIZATIONS**

**"The Voice of Veterans in Texas"**

### Texas Council State Legislative Report By Jim Cunningham, Vice Chair TCVO

This has been an eventful legislative session for the State of Texas and veterans that is fast coming to a close. The Texas Coalition of Veteran Organizations of which the Alamo Chapter and the Texas Council of Chapters is a member is an advocacy organization representing some 35 different MSOs and VSOs in the state. The core group which does the day to day advocacy is made up of the Chairman, Vice Chairman, Legislative Director and research Director. Each biennium, the TCVO, with input from its membership, selects three to four key issues that we want to work with the legislature.

This year, we have been pushing four issues. 1. A better defined legal obligation for state agency's to have a veterans' preference in hiring; 2. Give 100% property tax exemption to all widows of 100% disabled veterans; 3. Strengthen voting rights for Texas military members who are deployed; 4. Adjust exemptions for less than 100% disabled veterans.

Where veteran's preference is concerned, SB805 has been passed and sent to the Governor for signature. HB992 related to making all widows of 100% disabled veterans eligible for exemption has passed and is on the way to the Governor for signature. It will require passage of a constitutional amendment in November to be effective. SB1115 will allow for electronic voting for deployed Texas military members was passed and on the way to the Governor to be signed. Unfortunately, HB683 would have adjusted partially disabled exemptions failed to make it through the House for consideration and it died. This is something we will bring up again during the 85th Session in 2016.

As a result of complaints from the colleges and universities that they were losing huge amounts of tuition money from Hazlewood legacy students and, in particular, because of a Federal District Court ruling in Houston, which allowed one Georgia veteran to utilize the Hazlewood, a great deal of concern was raised about the future of the Hazlewood for veterans and in particular for their children. Needless to say there was a huge amount of misinformation that was circulating about the Hazlewood, its cost and its detrimental effects on the colleges and universities.

TCVO spent many hours and went through several meetings with the Governor's office, the Lt. Governor's office, the Attorney General and innumerable Senators and Representatives suggesting ways that the law could be changed to provide protections from large numbers of veterans from out of state converging to use the benefits of the law and also to protect those provisions that benefited the children of the veteran should the veteran choose to pass it on their children. What resulted was SB 1735 from Senator Brian Birdwell. While the bill took care of "outside" veterans coming to Texas to utilize the Hazlewood (requiring eight years of continuous residency, which we didn't oppose) it put some rather draconian rules in place which would have cut out the majority of any children of veterans being able to use it. For this reason, the TCVO asked its members to oppose it as written. The result was organized opposition from the members of TCVO, veterans and student veteran groups. Despite this opposition, the bill passed out of the Senate and went to the House, and was sponsored by Representative (Dr.) Zerwas.

## CHAPLAIN'S CORNER BY DOTTIE ALDER



### Are You In?

I read this story, and I thought it was food for thought. There was this woman who lived in a poor part of town and she was a prostitute. She was very ill, and dying. She had a small son. She sent him to find a minister, as she put it, "to get me in."

The little boy walked and walked to find a church. He found a very imposing church, and went around to the rectory, and the minister came to the door when he rang the bell. The minister looked at the little urchin and said "what do you want?" The little boy replied, "my mother is dying. She wants you to come to get her in." At first the minister thought the boy meant that his mother was out drunk somewhere so he said, get a policeman to get her home. The little boy said she is at home in bed and is dying. She wants someone to come and get her in. Would you come? He knew that he should go. He could not turn a down a request like that.

They walked and walked and came to the poor part of town. All the way he kept thinking what am I going to say to her? I can't say what I say to my congregation. You are so refined and cultured. Keep doing the things you do. I can't even tell her to reform. It's too late now. Then he remembered hearing his mother quoting John 3:16. In desperation he turned to it. It was not familiar to him. The woman wanted to go over the verse with him. Do you mean in spite of the type person I am, all I have to do is trust Jesus? He said that is what it says here. It says God gave His son to die on a cross. She believed Jesus and died. Later the minister told this story and said that night I not only got her in, but I got myself in.

The point of this story, examine your heart. Be sure you're in.

### Texas Council State Legislative Report By Jim Cunningham, Vice Chair TCVO (Continued)

The bill came before the House on the Sunday before Memorial Day. An impassioned four-hour debate ensued with 14 amendments being offered to the bill and one delay. Representative Garcia and Representative Farias, both veterans, gave powerful speeches regarding the changes to the bill that had been offered by amendment. The final result was an overwhelming number of the House members voting for a greatly changed bill, which kept the residency requirement, but changed and made better, the ability of the veteran to pass the benefits to their children.

Instead of the veteran having to have served six years of active duty to qualify to pass the benefit to their children, it was changed to require only four years of active duty, which we felt was much more reasonable since, we believe that this is the number of years most of our veterans have served. In addition, instead of requiring the child to use the benefit within fifteen years of the veterans discharge from active service, the bill was changed to allow its use up until their 26th birthday. The bill is now in conference committee to make final changes before it goes to the Governor for signature.

Frankly, these changes would not have come about had it not been for opposition to the bill, as written, from all parties concerned and the great work of key Representatives in the House. This is why it is important that we have a united front when dealing with issues such as this.

Another good thing to come from this bill is a requirement that the Hazlewood be studied during the interim to identify what its true costs are and to get consistent cost statements from the colleges and universities that have clearly identified methodologies in reaching whatever figures they have. This will allow the legislature to make much more coherent and knowledgeable decisions as to future funding and/or changes to the Hazlewood.

Many other veteran related bills have been passed this year and TCVO and MOAA have been there to support the majority of them.



**Please send a message to your congressional representatives to Support Key Senate Amendments. Several senators have introduced important amendments to the Senate defense authorization bill on military pay and benefits.**

<http://capwiz.com/moaa/issues/alert/?alertid=66315641&PROCESS=Take+Action>



## 2015 Meetings



August 25

October 27

December TBD

### Reservation for the August 25, 2015 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

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See the website [www.moagreaterdallas.org/officers.html](http://www.moagreaterdallas.org/officers.html) for the complete listing of committee chairs and external organization representatives.

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**V.W.I.N** BY NANCY RUTHFORD SODEMAN

Two of my constant companions are CONSUMER ACTION HANDBOOK and BEST PICK REPORTS. Every year the government offers CONSUMER ACTION HANDBOOK to all who write to Handbook, Federal Citizen Information Center, Pueblo, CO 81009 requesting this fine booklet that contains resources for the military, consumer information for buying, tips on how to avoid fraud, information about recalled products and services, credit and debit card information, hints on car buying and much more.

The other booklet worth your time to peruse, BEST PICK REPORTS, helps to find a wide variety of home services. It explores and advises about home remodeling, drainage systems, foundation repairs, tree services, water damage and mold remediation, warranties and much more. It evaluates to help one determine if a worker or a product is the best available. Contact Best Pick Reports, by Ebsco Research LLC, 1447 Peachtree Street, Suite 1050, Atlanta, GA 30309. Ask for the booklet that covers your city.

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