



# MOAA REPORTER

## FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

DAVE SCHAFER moaaschafer@att.net



### MEMORIAL DAY

I came across an article in today's Dallas Morning News<sup>1</sup> about a woman's tribute to her father who died on a bombing mission in WWII. The woman never met her father. She was born after he was deployed overseas. But she never forgot him and placed a memorial to him in the obituary section of the paper last week. As she was quoted in the article, "I don't want him forgotten."

Let this be a reminder to each of us to not forget our comrades who have fallen while defending this great country of ours. Memorial Day, which was first observed shortly after the Civil War, commemorates the men and women who died while in the armed forces. Originally observed on May 30<sup>th</sup>, Memorial Day is now observed on the last Monday in May. Many people visit cemeteries and memorials, place flags on veteran's graves, and attend ceremonies to honor those that made the ultimate sacrifice for their country.

But how many of these people really understand the sacrifices made by these fallen heroes? I believe that we, as part of the seven percent of the population who have served in the military, understand better than most the sacrifices made by members of the armed forces. It is our duty to help remind our fellow citizens of the true meaning of Memorial Day, especially the young. Let's help the JROTC cadets who are asked to place flags on veterans' graves or Scouts who march in Memorial Day events like Carry the Load understand the importance of what they are doing – commemorating and remembering the men and women who have sacrificed for our country.

Finally, let's start a new Memorial Day tradition, the National Moment of Remembrance. The National Moment of Remembrance Act, which was signed into law in 2000, encourages all Americans to pause wherever they are at 3PM local time on Memorial Day for a minute of silence to remember and honor those who have died in the service of their country. This hasn't been part of my past Memorial Day traditions, but I plan to make it a part of my future Memorial Day observances. I ask you all to spread the word and help put the "memorial" back in Memorial Day.

1. "A tribute to the dad she never knew", Steve Blow, The Dallas Morning News, May 31, 2015



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.

### UPCOMING EVENTS:

#### June 23—June Luncheon Meeting

Col. Brian D. Anderson, USAF (Ret.) Deputy Director of Council and Chapter Affairs in Washington, D.C. is our National representative. He has a wide range of command and staff assignments including U.S. Central Command, McDill AFB, and NATO in Brussels, Belgium. He joined the staff of MOAA's Career Transition Services Department in August 2011, and in December 2012, he was named deputy director, Council and Chapter Affairs Department.



#### 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.

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## PROGRAMS BY BEVERLY THOMPSON

# LUNCHEON MEETING — JUNE 23, 2015

**June 23, 2015 Luncheon Speaker - Col. Brian D. Anderson, USAF (Ret)**  
**Deputy Director, Council and Chapter Affairs**

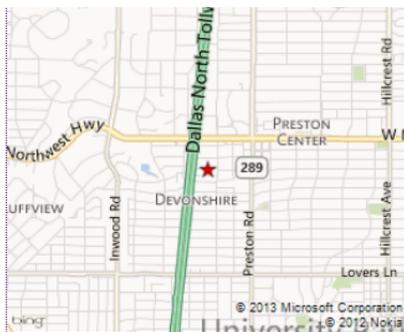
Anderson served 26 years in the U.S. Air Force in a wide range of command and staff assignments, including tours at U.S. Central Command, MacDill AFB, Fla., and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in Brussels, Belgium.

He retired in November 2010 following his last assignment as the mission support group commander at Bolling AFB, Washington, D.C., where he led a multidisciplinary 1,500-person group in the operations and administration of the base to support more than 40,000 Air Force personnel and family members in the national capital region.

Anderson compiled more than 4,000 flying hours in various aircraft and was awarded an Air Medal and Combat Action Medal as a B-52 aircraft commander during Operation Enduring Freedom.

He holds a Bachelor of Arts from Bowling Green State University in Ohio and a Master of Arts in public administration from the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs, Colo.

He joined the staff of MOAA's Career Transition Services Department in August 2011, and in December 2012, he was named deputy director, Council and Chapter Affairs Department.



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 or reserve online at [www.moagreaterdallas.org/onlinersvp.html](http://www.moagreaterdallas.org/onlinersvp.html). You may also call Dave at (214)577-4107.

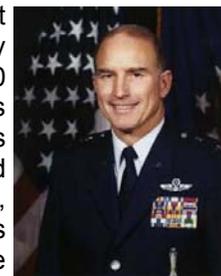


MOAA-GDC accepts **PayPal** for paying for your luncheon at our website which allows you to pay by credit card. We would appreciate you also filling out the RSVP form and checking your type of payment at the website.

## UPCOMING EVENTS BY BEVERLY THOMPSON

**August 23, 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." He resides in Austin, TX with his wife of many years.



## PERSONAL AFFAIRS BY BEN COLE

**Long term care** is needed by those who can't perform the basic tasks required to take care of themselves. This can include people suffering from a debilitating illness or chronic injury. The need for long term care can arise unexpectedly, often creating a large financial burden. Long term care insurance may help protect you against that risk.

Several groups are eligible to apply for coverage under the Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program (FLTCIP). This includes members and retired members of the uniformed services, and qualified relatives.

Visit the [FLTCIP Web site](http://www.moaa.org/Main_Menu/Access_Member_Benefits/Health/Long_Term_Care/Long_Term_Care.html) for more information on the basics to long term care. Also visit MOAA's Long Term Care resources at: [http://www.moaa.org/Main\\_Menu/Access\\_Member\\_Benefits/Health/Long\\_Term\\_Care/Long\\_Term\\_Care.html](http://www.moaa.org/Main_Menu/Access_Member_Benefits/Health/Long_Term_Care/Long_Term_Care.html)

## CHAPLAIN'S CORNER BY DOTTIE ALDER



### Joy

Can you tell which family is on their way to church or which is on their way to the beach? I can tell you. The beach goers are jumping up and down laughing and happy. The church goers are not smiling or talking to each other. Their faces are long.

Solomon was the wisest, and richest man that ever lived, but he was not happy. He had it all, but at the end of his life he looked back and asked why did I leave God out?

In Ecclesiastes 2:10 he says "I denied myself nothing my eyes desired: I refused my heart no pleasure. My heart took delight in all my work, and this was reward for all my labor. Yet when I surveyed all that my hands had done and what I had toiled to achieve, everything was meaningless, a chasing after the wind: nothing was gained under the sun." His conclusion was without God, life has no meaning.

If you put God first, the beach is a lot more fun. Happiness is circumstances, Joy is a sense of well-being, Rejoice, pray, and give thanks for the USA that you protected for us.

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## MEMBERSHIP ARTICLE BY DAVE SCHAFFER

The Greater Dallas Chapter sponsored the formation of the North Texas Chapter which was formally chartered in February 2015. The Greater Dallas Chapter has provided several areas of support to help the North Texas Chapter get up and running, to include joint membership in both chapters at no additional cost to members in 2015. The two chapters agreed to the geographical area to be covered by the North Texas Chapter and identified the specific zip code responsibilities for each chapter. The North Texas Chapter area of responsibility includes northern Collin, eastern Denton, Grayson, and Cook counties.

The zip codes now covered by the North Texas Chapter include the 48 founding members of the North Texas Chapter as well as 53 current members of the Greater Dallas Chapter. We sent a notice to each of the 53 Greater Dallas members residing in these zip codes in early May asking them whether they wanted to remain members of the Greater Dallas Chapter, move to the North Texas Chapter, or remain members of both chapters. We will be following up with each member who has not responded so we can finalize each chapter's membership rosters by the end of June in preparation for the 2016 membership renewal campaign which will start in September.

One important note – members are not restricted to membership in one chapter or to the chapter that is responsible for their geographical area. Each chapter offers different venues for meetings and different volunteer opportunities. Members are encouraged to join the chapter that best meets their needs or even join both chapters to take advantage of the benefits of each. Chapter membership is the foundation for a strong MOAA and both chapters are working together to encourage a membership model that best supports MOAA's advocacy for a strong national defense and preservation of earned benefits for the country's armed forces.

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## 35th Annual National Veterans Wheelchair Games

### June 21-26, 2015 Dallas, TX



The National Veterans Wheelchair Games will be held in Dallas from June 21 to June 26. This event, which is co-sponsored by the Veterans Administration and the Paralyzed Veterans of America, needs an army of volunteers to help with the games. Volunteers are needed to help with the games, transport athletes, set up the event, and many other areas. Volunteers are needed at many different locations around the city and at many different times of the day from June 17 to June 27. Bottom line is that you have a lot of flexibility in what, where and when you volunteer. The chapter is not supporting this as a community outreach program; however, we encourage everyone to consider volunteering to help make this event a success. You can find more information about the games and available volunteer positions by visiting [www.wheelchairgames.org](http://www.wheelchairgames.org). Contact Paul Pfrommer, 974-365-8443, if you have any questions.

## LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY JUNE 2015 UPDATE BY JIM BROWN

### U.S. Senate Panel Backs Pay Raise & Retirement Changes but Rejects Plans to Reform TRICARE

Members of the Senate Armed Services Committee's Personnel Subcommittee voted in May to include a troop pay raise of 1.3 percent rather than the 2.3 percent required by law for fiscal 2016, which is based on the estimated increase in private-sector wage growth. They also voted to support legislation that would offer troops a 401(k)-style retirement plan by 2017 with matching contributions and full vesting after two years.

The bill follows the House's lead of moving forward with a blended retirement plan for future troops. The commission recommendation and House committee's plan would offer a 401(k)-style investment account with government contributions that would travel with troops whenever they leave the military. Unlike the House proposal, the Senate bill stops government contributions to 401(k) accounts after 20 years of service. Troops already serving at the time the new plan takes effect would be grandfathered under their traditional military retirement system. They could choose to opt into the new plan, but would not be required to do so, as newly enlisting troops would be.

The bills propose an automatic federal contribution equal to 1 percent of troops' basic pay into their investment accounts, even if troops contribute nothing. Service members then could choose to contribute up to 5 percent of their basic pay, and the government would provide matching contributions. The new retirement system also would offer a lump-sum "continuation pay" for service members who stay beyond 12 years of service and the traditional monthly annuity for those who serve for 20 years and beyond.

However, the payouts would be reduced by about 20 percent from the current payments.

Both bills reject two TRICARE reform plans, one from the Obama administration to raise fees and consolidate the three option health benefit, and a second from the Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission to replace TRICARE entirely with a menu of civilian health insurance options and institute new fees for TRICARE For Life beneficiaries. The Senate bill also includes increases in TRICARE pharmacy fees as well as reductions to housing allowances.

Neither the House nor Senate bill addresses sequestration, which sets unrealistic budget caps on defense planners. To circumvent the arbitrary budget ceilings, both chambers use DoD's emergency war accounts to fund baseline operations. Emergency war accounts are not subject to sequestration's budget rules, but funding fluctuates drastically every year. Secretary of Defense Ash Carter said using the accounts to fund the Pentagon's base budget is "undermining basic principles of accountability and responsible, long-term planning."

The budgetary shell game has led to a veto threat from the president. In a rare move, the ranking democrats from the House and Senate Armed Services Committees, Rep. Adam Smith (Wash.) and Sen. Jack Reed (R.I.) voted against their own bills in an attempt to push lawmakers to come up with a bipartisan solution to sequestration.



"Cuts to pay and benefits are being driven because of one thing: sequestration," said MOAA's Deputy Director of Government Relations, Col. Mike Barron, USA (Ret). MOAA supports a blended retirement system that can provide a portable benefit to those who leave voluntarily with less than 20 years of service. However, any change to the retirement system cannot put at risk retention of the highly experienced, mid-grade NCO or officer the services need to keep.

**Please send a message to your congressional representatives to prevent the stiff budgetary penalties on the military community in the Senate proposals. MOAA has a suggested message at:**

<http://capwiz.com/moaa/issues/alert/?alertid=64057886>

*Editor's Note: Legislative article continues on page 6*

## LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY JUNE 2015 UPDATE (CONTINUED) BY JIM BROWN

### Retail Pharmacy Making A Comeback?

MOAA has reported that Congress included a provision in the defense bill giving TRICARE beneficiaries more choice in their pharmacy options. The House Armed Services Committee's version of the FY16 defense bill contains language giving military beneficiaries the option of using a designated "preferred retail pharmacy" to obtain medications.

The pilot will include maintenance medications, which after last year's policy change, are currently only available at a military treatment facility (MTF) or by the home delivery program. The assumption is that by giving participating pharmacies the ability to buy medications at rates available to the federal government, retailers will pass the savings on to beneficiaries.

DoD will be responsible for identifying the regional area where the pilot will be conducted, as well as determining the participating pharmacy retailers. In order for selected pharmacies to receive federal pricing on medications purchased for beneficiaries, retailers will need to comply with DoD distribution and compliance requirements.

The pilot will be evaluated for government cost-savings, just as the home delivery program has provided. Skeptics are concerned that the distribution and compliance requirements may be costly for the pharmacies, and drive up the costs of prescriptions.

### Defense Department to Propose Sweeping Personnel Reforms

Brad Carson, acting undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness, vowed to deliver a "full package of potential reforms" by August, which will include both high-level policy changes and proposed legislation for Congress. Carson, a former Oklahoma congressman and Navy reservist who deployed to Iraq in 2008-09, is ramping up an aggressive campaign within DoD to build support for the reforms, which are likely to be controversial. The proposals may include:

- ◆ Overhauling the jobs assignment process to give individual troops and unit-level commanders more control over how billets are filled. Carson suggests personnel bureaucracies could play a more limited role in a system that may resemble the civilian job market, which relies on individuals' resumes and personal interviews.
- ◆ Giving troops more career flexibility to transfer between active and reserve components multiple times during a career.
- ◆ Improving "permeability" between the armed forces, the private sector and other government agencies by creating "customizable paths to service" such as midcareer entry, stints in the reserve components or even assignments outside the Defense Department.
- ◆ Revamping the promotion system to place less weight on time-in-grade and more on merit, skills and performance.
- ◆ Creating a portable 401(k)-style retirement benefit for all troops may help motivate some to pursue nontraditional career paths that include years in the reserve components and may not ultimately qualify them for the traditional 20-year cliff-vesting pension.

Current rules penalize service members who work or study in the private sector, and rigid career tracks give a distinct advantage to troops who follow traditional paths.

Time-in-grade requirements, which give more weight to seniority over performance, are coming under new scrutiny, and Carson indicated this particular issue may be at the center of his reform effort. "We permit only a fraction of our service members to seek training in civilian educational institutions, to move between services or occupational specialties or to transfer between active and reserve components...[We] have a one-size-fits-all model of production, in which people are not seen as uniquely valuable so much as almost interchangeable inputs into an industrial machine."

One major project under discussion is a massive, first-of-its-kind personnel management system featuring a new internal social media network to help match troops with commanders in need of their skills. Such a system could be used to track detailed information about every individual service member and transform the way the force is planned and managed.



June 23

## 2015 Meetings



August 25

October 27

December TBD

### Reservation for the June 23, 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 \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
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Mail Reservation to: Dave Schafer

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

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See the website [www.moaagreaterdallas.org/officers.html](http://www.moaagreaterdallas.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

Veterans and surviving spouses might be eligible for an additional pension benefit if they are unable to perform basic daily functions like bathing, eating, and dressing without the aid of another person or if they essentially are confined to their homes because of a permanent disability. Beneficiaries must be eligible for a VA pension to receive this benefit. Inquire at your local VA regional office (<http://bit.ly/varegional>) and/or consult a veterans service officer (<http:bit.ly/findvso>) for free assistance. MOAA also offers a fact sheet and benefit counseling about Aid and Attendance. Learn more at [www.moaa.org/aidatt](http://www.moaa.org/aidatt). I found this information recently in the publication, The Military Officer.



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